AGENDA ITEM or FINAL CONTRACT REVIEW SUBMITTAL FORM

Agenda Item: Gunnison Public Lands Initiative Presentation

Action Requested: Discussion

Parties to the Agreement:

Term Begins: **Term Ends:** **Grant Contract #:**

Summary:

Gunnison Public Lands Initiative Presentation

Fiscal Impact:

Submitted by: Liz Mense **Submitter's Email Address:** EMense@gunnisoncounty.org

Finance Review: ○ Required ◉ Not Required

Comments:

Reviewed by: Discharge Date:

County Attorney Review: ○ Required ◉ Not Required

Comments:

Reveiwed by: Discharge Date: Certificate of Insurance Required

Yes ○ No ○

County Manager Review:

Comments:

Reveiwed by: GUNCOUNTY1\mbirnie Discharge Date: 5/24/2019

○ Consent Agenda ○ Regular Agenda ○ Worksession Time Allotted: 1 hour

Agenda Date: 5/28/2019

Revised April 2015

May 24, 2019

Board of County Commissioners
Gunnison County, Colorado
200 E. Virginia Avenue
Gunnison, CO 81230

Dear Gunnison County Commission:

We, the undersigned groups, are writing to update and inform you of the progress with the Gunnison Public Lands Initiative (GPLI) and to urge your support. We have participated in a thorough process of stakeholder and community engagement for nearly four years, and we are excited by the level of community engagement and cooperation that characterize this process. The GPLI proposal is nearing completion, and we respectfully ask for Gunnison County's support for the revised proposal described in our January 2019 report and ongoing work to finalize it. Your support and recognition is vital to the efforts and collaborative approach that the undersigned have engaged upon to coalesce a regional consensus.

Through open and robust discussion, the GPLI coalition has nearly completed a comprehensive land protection proposal for the Gunnison Basin. The GPLI has carefully considered the full range of community interests in public lands, in and around Gunnison County including ranching, water resources, motorized use, forest management, mineral extraction, conservation, hiking, skiing, mountain biking, recreation, and hunting and angling. This group has worked together in a very collaborative manner to reach this point. Every group has sought to understand other's concerns as well as voice their own, and each have made compromises to further the values of the GPLI and community.

Gunnison County and Senator Bennet's office have played critical facilitating roles in these discussions, bringing invaluable local and legislative knowledge to the table, and providing a vital framework for productive discussions. We are grateful to both for creating a venue and fostering a process where we've been able to reach such an impressive level of consensus.

The GPLI released its initial proposal in June 2017 and since then has been engaging the community and diverse stakeholders in conversations about the proposal and what it would mean for the future of our local public lands. For the most part, key stakeholder groups and community members in and around the Gunnison Basin voiced support for the GPLI's consensus initial proposal.

At the same time, members of the community had some specific concerns with particular aspects of the initial proposal. As a result of that feedback, the GPLI has worked to refine the initial recommendations, including adjusting boundaries or in some circumstances changing land designation recommendations. The GPLI is proud of its consensus revised recommendations to protect key federal public lands as either special management areas or wilderness.

Each proposed designation was agreed upon after extensive analysis, discussion and compromise, and would help to protect existing values. The proposal also provides for continuation of grazing operations, the ability to control insects and disease, restoration activities, and emergency response such as rescue and firefighting, for example.

There are a few areas that are listed in the report for further discussion – this process will conclude soon, and the GPLI proposal will be complete and ready for further community vetting. They are limited however, and won't significantly change the overall shape of the proposal. The GPLI is committed to reaching

a decision on recommendations for these outlying areas in the coming months and will revisit the issue with the Commissioners at that time.

We have also been engaged in the Grand Mesa Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests forest plan revision process, advocating for administrative provisions that reflect the recommendations in the GPLI's January 2019 report. Our recommendations represent just the kind of collaborative and science-based planning that will help guide management of National Forest System lands in and around Gunnison County "so that they are ecologically sustainable and contribute to social and economic sustainability; consist of ecosystems and watersheds with ecological integrity and diverse plant and animal communities; and have the capacity to provide people and communities with ecosystem services and multiple uses that provide a range of social, economic, and ecological benefits for the present and into the future." 36 C.F.R. 219.1(c). We hope that the recommendations in that report will be incorporated into the revised forest plan.

With that in mind, we ask Gunnison County for your support for the GPLI revised proposal as described in our January 2019 report, with the understanding that we will update you and the public as we finalize details. The collaborative approach to finding this consensus is indicative of a greater community desire to see management at a recognizable, manageable, local level. We thank you again for your key participation in the process, and look forward to continued work with you to finalize the GPLI and support it as it moves to the legislative phase.

Sincerely,

Steven Guerrieri
Gunnison County Stockgrowers Association

Tim Kugler
Gunnison Trails

Matt Reed
High Country Conservation Advocates

Terry Peterson
Gunnison County Sno-Trackers

Ben Breslauer
Gunnison O.H.V. Alliance of Trailriders

Dave Ochs
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Kevin Alexander
Trout Unlimited

Tony Prendergast
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers

Jeff Widen
The Wilderness Society

Frank Kugel
Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District

Gunnison Public Lands Initiative

Community Endorsement

Public lands in Gunnison County are a cornerstone to our lives. Public lands are critical for sustaining our strong economy, high-quality of life, ranching heritage, excellent recreational opportunities, abundant wildlife, clean air and water, incredible views, and intact landscapes. The Gunnison Public Lands Initiative (GPLI) is a coalition of diverse community interests who came together to create a proposal to safeguard public lands, protect our communities' heritage, respect historic uses of public lands, support a strong and sustainable economy for Gunnison County, and preserve our quality of life for generations to come.

I support efforts to protect public lands in Gunnison County including the proposal drafted by the GPLI which aims to designate special management areas and wilderness on federal lands in the County. This proposal will require community involvement and compromise in order to be successfully implemented, and is necessary for protecting headwaters, valuable wildlife habitat, and unique backcountry recreation.

I urge public officials at the local, regional and federal levels to support the GPLI, as we do here in Gunnison County. Gunnison County residents represent a wide range of interests, and we sincerely thank Senator Bennet for working with the local community to explore long-term lands protection for Gunnison County and urge Rep. Tipton and Senator Gardner to support the effort.

Signatories

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290	James V	TX 76712
291	James Webb	651 Gothic Road, Chateaux 510 E, Mt. Crested Butte, CO 81225 USA
292	Jan Dijkstra	177 White St. Circle, Crested Butte, CO 81224
293	Jan Thompson	3C294 Hanson Mesa, Hotchkiss, CO 81419
294	Janae Pritchett	PO Box 2172, Crested Butte, CO 81224
295	Jane Kaichen	31471 Hwy 149, Gunnison, CO 81230
296	Jane Rogers	2071 Alameda Dr., Deltona, FL 32728
297	Janet Martin	PO Box 2694, Crested Butte, CO 81224
298	Janet Turner	21 Vulcan, Gunnison, CO 81230
299	Jason Michalak	215 White Ave., Crested Butte, CO 81224 US
300	Jay Fitzgerald	416 Sherman Canal Venice CA 90291
301	Jeanine Kenyon	300 Beuington Rd #5, Gunnison, CO 81230
302	Jefe Branham	Gunnison CO 81230
303	Jeff Bivens	319 Larkspur Ln, Box 2433, Creste Butte, CO 81224

304	Jeff Dautrich	PO Box 206, Crested Butte, CO 81224
305	Jeff Deloney	515 Gothic Avenue, Crested Butte, CO 81224
306	Jeff Guy	8501 CR 240G, Salida, CO 81201
307	Jeff Krueger	PO Box 2615, Crested Butte, CO 81224 United States of America
308	Jeff Poznanovic	Pine St., Lake City, CO 81235 USA
309	Jeff RIeks	
310	Jeff Scott	PO Box 326 Crested Butte CO 81224
311	Jeff Weak	704 n. boulevard, Gunnison, co 81230 usa
312	Jeffrey Boose	6355 S. Geneva Circle, Englewood, CO 80111
313	Jeffrey Butterworth	211 E. Drewry Ln., Raleigh, NC 27609
314	Jen Brody	PO Box 1256, Crested Butte, CO 81224
315	Jennie Noreen	PO Box 853, Crested Butte, CO 81224
316	Jennifer Bock	PO Box 3001, Crested Butte, CO 81224
317	Jennifer I	140 Krameria St., Denver, CO 80220
318	Jennifer Lucas	7711 Meadow Park Dr. #229, Dallas, TX 75230
319	Jennifer Rose	311 circle p drive, Prescott, Az 86303 USA
320	Jenny Giudice	Gunnison, CO 81230
321	Jere Jones	1394 County Rd 743, Gunnison, CO 81230
322	Jerry Kowal	318 Skyline Dr, Gunnison, CO 81230
323	Jerry Mauney	PO Box 443, Gunnison, CO 81230
324	Jessica Zuzack	PO Box 7108, Gunnison, CO 81230
325	Jill Galvin	717 Fox Tail Dr., Edmond, OK 73034 USA
326	Jill Pitt	PO Box 3252, Crested Butte, CO 81224
327	Jill Young	410 N. Boulevard St. Gunnison, CO 81230
328	Jim Cattarello	2452 I Road, Grand Junction, CO 81505
329	Jim Curry	2752 n clay st, Denver, Co 80211 USA
330	Jimmy Buchanan	29 Grey Wolf, Santa Fe, NM 87506
331	Joan Hewitt	133 Hartman Rocks Dr., Gunnison, CO 81230
332	Joan Swift	PO Box 1103, Crested Butte, CO 81224
333	Jocelyn Leroux	110 Emerald Lane, Gunnison, CO 81230
334	Jodie Howard	2680 Brick Diamond Terrace, Colorado Springs, CO 80918
335	Jody Palmer	4255 s.plumtree terr., inverness, FL 34452 United States
336	Joe DeLaRosa	9906 Chapel Street, San Antonio, TX 78217

337	Joe Summerville	PO Box 3192, Crested Butte, CO 81224
338	Joe Thinnes	13645 4100 Rd., Paonia, CO 81224
339	Joel Meier	22097 US Highway 6 Unit 2542, Keystone, CO 80435 USA
340	Joey Micucci	911 N Spruce Gunnison CO 81230
341	John Barkowski	616 E Del Norte, Colorado Springs, CO 80907 United States
342	John Beene	304 N 9th St #A6, Gunnison, CO 81230
343	John Bickerman	4011 Thornapple St., Chevy Chase, MD 20815
344	John Gioia	Gunnison, CO 81230
345	John Hess	PO Box 925, Crested Butte, CO 81224
346	John Lake	600 Butler Ave Boaz AL 35957
347	John McGowan	PO Box 2777, Crested Butte, CO 81224
348	John Meyer	PO Box 361, Crested Butte, CO 81224
349	John Morris	619 gothic ave #5, Crested Butte, CO 81224 USA
350	John Patterson	600 N Adams, PO Box 5033, Gunnison, CO 81231
351	John Sahene	3225 Ferndale Cutoff, Little Rock, AR 72223
352	John Stacey	1509 Lake Shore Drive, Escanaba, MI 49289
353	Johnathan Cuppett	Crested Butte, CO 81224
354	Johnny Drane	4875 S. Jerich Ct., Aurora, CO 86013
355	Jon Kaminsky	Gunnison CO 81230
356	Joseph Baker	600 N. Colorado #A304, Gunnison, CO 81230
357	Joseph Dunn	26 Elk Ave, Crested Butte, CO 81224
358	Josh Kuhn	1536 Wynkoop Street, CO 80202
359	Josh Stupka	518 A N. Main Street, Gunnison, CO 81230
360	Joshua Burke	8610 W. 93rd Pl, Westminster, CO 80021 USA
361	Joyce Roloff	PO Box 2780, Crested Butte, CO 81224
362	Juanita Powell	PO Box 51, Malta Bend, MO 65339
363	Judy W Arthur	1412 Northwood Cr, Lynchburg, VA 24503
364	Julia Van Raalte	PO Box 3462, Crested Butte, CO 81224
365	Julia Z Head	325 Sopris Avenue, Crested Butte, CO 81224
366	Julianna Waller	711 N. 11th Street, Gunnison, CO 81230
367	Julie Dondero	3001 E. Chestnut Ave, Vineland, NJ 08361
368	Julie Marshall	PO Box 1986, Crested Butte, CO 81224
369	Julie Nania	PO Box 1246, Crested Butte, CO 81224

370	Kalee Olmstead	Po Box 1628, 156 floyd, Crested Butte, Colorado 81224 United States
371	Kara Bradford	446 Ludwig Dr, Bayfield, CO 81122
372	Karen Hausdoerffer	711 N 8th St., Gunnison, CO 81230
373	Karen Kenney	3064 S Dahlia, Denver, CO 80222
374	Karen Terrell	1 Sagehill Spur, Almont, CO 81210
375	Karen Williams	Gunnison, CO 81230
376	Karen Yancik	109 Rt 138, Benld, FL 62009
377	Karl manz	5300 cherry creek south dr apt 1412, denver, co 80246 usa
378	Karl Trujillo	PO Box 5156, Mt. Crested Butte, CO 81225
379	Kate Seeley	516 2nd Street, Crested Butte, CO 81224
380	Kate Vogel	331 Sopris Ave., Box 1747, Crested Butte, CO 81224 USA
381	Kathleen Skinner	1313 W Ohio #2, Gunnison, CO 81230
382	Kathleen Yancik	306 W. Sixth St, Mt Olive, IL 62069
383	Kathryn Renga	314 W Spencer Ave, Gunnison, CO 81230
384	Kathryn Vogel	PO Box 1747, Crested Butte, CO 81224
385	Kathy Mattoon	404 S. Wisconsin St., Gunnison, CO 81230
386	Katie Eddleman	Gunnison, CO 81230
387	Katie Young	15001 Spring Meadows Dr. Darnestown, MD 20874
388	Kecia Vekovius	712 Chinquapin Dr., Shreveport, LA 71106
389	Keith Fisher	620 N. 14th St Gunnison, CO 81230
390	Ken Bolich	703 DeFoors Mill Circle, NW, Atlanta, GA 30318
391	Ken Collins	250 E Alameda St. No. 608, Santa Fe, NM 87501
392	Ken Dondero	3001 E. Chestnut Ave. I-81, Vineland, NJ 08361
393	Kendall Cox	700 W. Ruby Ave., Gunnison, CO 81231
394	Kevin Chedd	2450 Highway 135 #5, Gunnison, CO 81230
395	Kevin Magee	621 N. Colorado, Gunnison, CO 81230 USA
396	Kevin Ott	PO Box 1537, Crested Butte, CO 81224
397	Kim Braman	Howard, CO usa
398	Kim Maddox	814 Elk Ave., PO Box 2405, Crested Butte, CO 81224
399	Kirk McClanahan	1010 W. Virginia, #34, Gunnison, CO 81230 United States
400	Kirsten Atkins	PO Box 592, Crested Butte, CO 81224
401	Kirsten Dotzler	716 Elk Ave, Crested Butte, CO 81224
402	Kit Samtaid	Gunnison, CO 81230

403	Kris Curtis	120 Gothic Ave, PO Box 1820, Crested Butte, CO 81224
404	Kris Pobocoff	512 Third St., PO Box 1315, Crested Butte, CO 81224
405	Kristin Fitzgerald	21 Links Lane Crested Butte, CO 81224
406	Kyle Adams	1433 Williams #500, Denver, CO 80218
407	Kyle Tibbett	212 S. 11th Street, # 207, Gunnison, CO 81230
408	Lance Galvin	717 Fox Tail Dr., Edmond, OK 73034
409	lanfranchini catherine	29 rue du moulin, créteil, 94000 france
410	Lara Ramsey	19221 N State Hwy 135 Almont, CO 81210
411	Larry Mosher	PO Box 2829, Crested Butte, CO 81224
412	Larry Pearcy	2303 CR 17, Gunnison, CO 81230
413	Laura Eggebraten	446 Anderson Dr, Crested Butte, CO 81224
414	Laura Mitchell	PO Box 1108, Crested Butte, CO 81224
415	Laura Yale	135 Wildbird Lane Crested Butte CO 81224
416	Laurel Walker	PO Box 3523, Crested Butte, CO 81224
417	Lauren Madry	PO Box 1445, Crested Butte, CO 81224
418	Lauren Murray	7605 Shadow Wood Dr, North Richland Highlands, TX 76182
419	Lauren Shacklefud	Gunnison, CO 81230
420	Lauren Wentworth	Gunnison, CO 81230
421	Lawrence Cronk	204 West Day, Herington, KS 67449
422	Leah Williams	PO Box 2443, Crested Butte, CO 81224
423	Lee Ditkoff	304 Elk Ave. Crested Butte, CO 81224
424	Len Strickland	6631 Beaver Creek Dr., Fairhope, AL 36532
425	Leonard Dunen	PO Box 234, Gunnison, CO 81230
426	Lesley Seale	PO Box 3453, Crested Butte, CO 81224
427	Leslie Boose	6355 S. Geneva Circle, Englewood, CO 80111
428	Leslie Lacey	485 Arapahoe Ave. Boulder, CO 80302
429	Linda Brown	2200 Andover Ct #305, Little Rock, AR 72227
430	Linda Fontaine	PO Box 150128, Austin, TX 78715-0128
431	Linda Hansen	43018 Minnesota Creek Rd, Paonia, CO 81428
432	Linda Johnson-Evans	818 Belleview Ave, Crested Butte, CO 81224
433	Linda Lehman-Murphy	25067 Foothills Dr. North, Golden, CO 80401
434	Linda Paulaitis	5 Links Ln, Crested Butte, CO 81224
435	Linda Roberts	Crested Butte CO 81224

436	Lindsay Arell	PO Box 2634, Crested Butte, CO 81224
437	Lindsay Arne	PO Box 393, Crested Butte, CO 81224
438	Lisa Danos	64 Yucca Ct., Gunnison, CO 81230 USA
439	Lisa Niermann	36639 M50 Rd, Hotchkiss, CO 81419 US
440	Lisa Whiting	1407 E. 10th Ave, Denver, CO 80218
441	Liz Lucker	20 Rocky Valley Cove, Little Rock, AR 72212
442	Lucille Beckman	PO Box 2659, Crested Butte, CO 81224
443	Lucille Lucas	PO Box 2102, Crested Butte, CO 81224
444	Luke Verbus	808 N. 4th St. #8,
445	Lyle Campbell	2204 Mescalero, Grand Junction, CO 81507
446	Lynn Moore	PO Box 2004, Crested Butte, CO 81224
447	Madeline Thomas	308 South Boulevard, Gunnison, Colorado 81230
448	Mae McInitire	PO Box 7140, Gunnison, CO 81230
449	Mallory Logan	423 n pine st, Gunnison, Co 81230
450	Maneli Leigh	1000 6th St., Golden, CO 80403
451	Marc Yeston	PO Box 4015, Crested Butte, CO 81224 USA
452	Marcel Medved	PO Box 3325 Crested Butte, CO 81224
453	Marco White	PO Box 652, Crested Butte, CO 81224
454	Marge Chandler	Box 174, Eagle, CO 81631 Eagle
455	Maria Rodriguez	32976 J Road, Hotchkiss, CO 81419
456	Mark Day	35 Debby Way, Gunnison, CO 81230
457	Mark Dolemba	512 1/2 Sopris Avenue, P.O. Box 2231, Crested Butte, CO 81224 United States
458	Mark Martelon	1507 E 10th Ave #111, Denver, CO 80218
459	Mary Burt	Gunnison, CO 81230
460	Mary Chandler	PO Box 3443, Crested Butte, CO 81224
461	Mary Schmidt	320 whiterock ave, Crested butte, Co 81224 Usa
462	Mary Young	320 N. Boulevard St., Gunnison, CO 81230
463	Maryanne Embury	713 north hancock avenue, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903 usa
464	Matt Whitting	2094 Candy Rd 740, Crested Butte, CO 81224
465	Matt Zazzi	PO 1473 Crested Butte, CO 81224
466	Matthew Evans	19 Elk Ave CB, CO 81224
467	Matthew Lamb	1917 Meadowaire Dr., Ft. Collins, CO 80525
468	Matthew Tello	715 W. Denver Ave., Gunnison, CO 81230

469	Matthew Ward	600 N Adams St, Gunnison, CO 81231
470	Mattison Brown	PO Box 2806, Crested Butte, CO 81224
471	Maui Lee	602 Adams St., Gunnison, CO 81231
472	Maureen Hall	Crested Butte CO 81224
473	Megan Randall	PO Box 1624, Paonia, CO 81428 United States
474	Meri Rosenblatt	3834 Morgans Creek, San Antonio, TX 78230
475	Mia Phillips	PO Box 1305, Crested Butte, CO 81224
476	Michael Brody	PO Box 1256, Crested Butte, CO 81224
477	michael chiappini	101 N 10th St. #11, Gunnison, 81230 usa
478	Michael Enright	PO Box 1682, Crested Butte, CO 81224
479	*Michael Garren*	*PO Box 990 CB, CO 81224*
480	Michael Haney	PO Box 1761, Crested Butte, CO 81224
481	Michael Pankratz	
482	Michael Turner	21 Vulcan, Gunnison, CO 81230
483	Michael Weidler	1839 Gallagher Ln, Louisville, CO 80027
484	Mikael Lindvall	9697 Timbervale Ct, Highlands Ranch, CO 80129 United States
485	Mikahla Claussen	PO Box 1157, Crested Butte, CO 81224
486	Mike Adler	148 Elcho Ave #2, Crested Butte South, CO 81224
487	Mike Coleman	205 s wisconsin st, Gunnison, Co 81230 United States of America
488	Mike Keith	PO Box 3484, Crested Butte, CO 81224
489	Mike Oluich	PO Box 2814, Crested Butte, CO 81224
490	Mike Paulitaitis	5 Links Ln, Crested Butte, CO 81224
491	Miles Millwee	Sarasota, FL 34241
492	Millicent Young	PO Box 614, Paonia, CO 81428
493	Molly Larmie	24830 US Hwy 50 #ECG-L, Gunnison, CO 81230
494	Molly Murfee	PO Box 1067 Crested Butte CO 81224
495	Molly Stevenson	61 S. Sherman, Denver, CO 80209
496	Molly Susla	PO Box 3152, Crested Butte, CO 81224
497	Monica Morgan	1355 S. Garfield St., Denver, CO 80210
498	Monroe Spector	157 Spring Meadows Tr, Gunnison, CO 81230
499	Murtaza Naqui	19052 E Chenango Circle 10, Aurora, CO 80015
500	Nancy Damer	33501 Kittyhawk Ave, Templeton, Iowa 51463
501	Nasim Lokhandwala	3355 Bridger Trail, Apt. 202, Boulder, CO 80301

502	Natalie Berkman	322 N Taylor, Gunnison, CO 81230
503	Nathan Kubes	501 N. 8th St. Gunnison, CO 81230
504	Neil Beltchenko	Crested Butte CO 81224
505	Neil Glass	18916 Saddle River Dr., Edmonds, OK 73012
506	Neil McNutt	808 1/2 West Georgia Ave, Gunnison, CO 81230
507	Neil Opalinski	PO Box 3264, Crested Butte, CO 81224
508	Nellie Graber	2280 Mesa Rd, Colorado Springs, CO 80904
509	Nicholas Madden	C.P.O. 5827 600 N. adams st., Colorado 81231 United States
510	Nick Taylor	29 Paradise Rd., Crested Butte, CO 81224
511	Noel Adam	Po Box 423, Crested Butte, Co 81224 Gunnison
512	Norma Cady	PO Box 4887, Buena Vista, CO 81211
513	Paige Goedjen	8263 Whisper Creek Trail, Greenfield, MN 55373
514	Paris Day	28517 P25 Rd, Hotchkiss, CO 81419
515	Parker Clarkson	110 Emerald Lane, Gunnison, CO 81230
516	Parry Mothershead	PO Box 3813, Crest d Butte, CO 81224 USA
517	Pat Wallace	Crested Butte CO 81224
518	Patricia Del Tredici	311 Cement Creek Rd, Unit G, Crested Butte, Colorado 81224
519	Patricia Zishka	3877 75th St, Boulder, CO 80301
520	Patrick Boyd	Slate River Rd, Crested Butte, CO 81224 USA
521	Paul Arthur	PO Box 732, Crested Butte, CO 81224
522	Paul Buck	3444 CR 10, Gunnison, CO 81230
523	Paul Davis	2 Elk Ave #10, Crested Butte, CO 81224
524	Paul Johnston	PO Box 4403, Aspen, CO 81611
525	Paula Glass	18916 Saddle River Dr., Edmond, OK 73012
526	Paw Johnson	4785 Brown Valley Ln., Colorado Springs, CO 80918
527	Peggy Moore	169 Goreu St., Crested Butte, CO 81224
528	Penni Ervin	PO Box 458, Crested Butte, CO 81224
529	Petar Dopchev	P.O. Box 1638, Crested Butte, CO 81224 USA
530	Pete Giannini	PO Box 3003, Crested Butte, Colorado 81224 USA
531	Peter Carey	PO Box 2011, Crested Butte, CO 81224
532	Peter Ferrell	P.O. Box 2591, Crested Butte, CO 81224 United States
533	Peter Groeneweger	Engereldsestr 4, Groesser, 6023PA Netherlands
534	Peter Gudolawicz	PO Box 2758, Crested Butte, CO 81224

535	Peter Horgan	PO Box 4252, Crested Butte, CO 81224
536	Peter May	PO Box 358 Crestone, CO 81131
537	Peter Mueller	PO Box 1034, Paonia, CO 81428
538	Philip Effland	1010 W. Virginia Avenue, Lot 6, Gunnison, Colorado 81230
539	Phyllis Swackhamer	PO Box 1291, Paonia, CO 81428
540	Polly McGrave	PO Box 2658, Crested Butte, CO 81224
541	R Jones	PO Box 1986, Crested Butte, CO 81224
542	Rachael Green	600 N. Adams St., 28, Gunnison, CO 81231
543	Rachel Blank	PO Box 3364, Crested Butte, CO 81224
544	Ramon Reed	704 State St.,, Pitkin, CO 81241
545	Rebecca Lehman	c/o RMBL PO Box 519, Crested Butte, CO 81224
546	Rebecca Stern	81230
547	Reed Betz	Crested Butte CO 81224
548	Reed Whitmont	559 Resevoir Rd, Crested Butte, CO 81224
549	Reggie Park	PO Box 723, Crested Butte, CO 81224
550	Regula Rutishauser	Dieustbach 2, Bubiksh, 8608 Switzerland
551	Reiner Kraus	Wildhorse at Prospect, Mt. Crested Butte, Colorado 81225
552	Rich Huss	Gunnison, CO 81230
553	Richard Kimball	PO Box 249 Crested Butte CO 81224
554	Richard Matthews	61 Creek Cove, Crested Butte, CO 81224
555	Richard Niemeyer	PO Box 2362, Taos, NM 87571
556	Richard Stenson	210 South Blvd. St., Gunnison, Co. 81230 US
557	Rick Murray	725 Sopris Ave. Box 4158, Crested Butte, CO 81224
558	Rick Seymour	284 Cedar Hills Rd, Silt, Co 81653 Usa
559	Rita Payne	PO Box 722, Crested Butte, CO 81224
560	Rob Burnett	P.O. Box 170, Crested Butte, CO 81224 USA
561	Rob Cushman	403 S 14 St., Gunnison, CO 81230
562	Rob Lewis	PO Box 353, Allenspark, CO 80510
563	Robbie Robinson	Crested Butte CO 81224
564	Robert Alessi	PO Box 120009, Staten Island, NY 10312
565	Robert Brown	1206 W Tomichi Ave Apt 5, Gunnison, Colorado 81230
566	Robert Justman	14659 Peony Lane, Paonia, CO 81428
567	Robert Mahedy	PO Box 2401, Crested Butte, CO 81224

568	Roberta Beckman	3707 Lonniewood, Houston, TX 77059
569	Roberta Davis	12 Sugar Creek Dr., Austin, TX 78746
570	Robin Matalon	PO Box 995, Crested Butte, CO 81224
571	Robin Oscar	1 Ridge Lane, Crested Butte, CO 81224
572	Rodney Teem	PO Box 2583, Crested Butte, CO 81224
573	Roger Bowler	1211 Red Mountain, Crested Butte, CO 81224
574	Ron Edwards	Po Box 2973, Crested Butte, CO 81224
575	Ronald Phaneuf	28 Crystal Park Dr., Redstone, CO 81623
576	Rosalie Ott	PO Box 1537, Crested Butte, CO 81224
577	Rose Holmes	417 Delta Avenue, Paonia, CO 81428
578	Ross Mittelman	3826 G Rd., Palisade, CO 81526
579	Rossi Phillips	PO Box 3093, Crested Butte, CO 81224
580	Russ Wilson	36694 Forest tr, Elizabeth, Co 80107 USA
581	Ryan Bennet	2581 Indian Hills Grove, Colorado Springs, CO 80902
582	Ryan Cadenhead	PO Box 2808, Crested Butte, CO 81224 USA
583	Ryan Fries	213 N Adams, Gunnison, CO 81230
584	Ryan Hotchkiss	Gunnison, CO 81230
585	Ryan Mudgett	311 n. 3rd st, Gunnnison, Colorado 81230 US
586	Ryan Wilbur	320 N Boulevard, Gunnison, CO 81230
587	Sally Johnson	95 Packer Way, Crested Butte, CO 81224
588	Sam Allen	
589	Sam Brown	41342 O Road, Paonia, CO 81428
590	Sam Faivre	PO Box 3373, Crested Butte, CO 81224
591	Sam Ferguson	134 Truscott Place, Aspen, CO 81611 USA
592	Sam Kozel	PO Box 4074, Crested Butte, CO 81224
593	Sam Pankratz	127 CR 11, Gunnison, CO 81230
594	Sammantha Rowland	P.o. Box 4303, Crested Butte, CO 81224 USA
595	Sammy Castillo	81224
596	*Sandy Fails*	*PO Box 663 CB, CO 81224*
597	Sandy McCormack	214 S. Dogwood Ave, Republic, MO 65738
598	Sandy Shea	145 Wildbird Lane Crested Butte CO 81224
599	Sara Everhart	PO Box 3512, Crested Butte, CO 81224
600	Sarah Borchert	681 Joplin Street, Aurora, CO 80011 United States

601	Sarah Crockett	PO Box 3512, Crested Butte, CO 81224
602	Sarah Kidwiler	1005 37th St, Vienna, WV 26105
603	Sarah Krumholz	16 Windsor Dr., Hingham, MA 02043
604	Sarah Stubbe	PO Box 3424, Crested Butte, CO 81224
605	Sasha Legese	524 1/2 B N. Boulevard, Gunnison, CO 81230
606	Scott Stewart	PO Box 1662, Crested Butte, CO 81224
607	Scott Timothy	699 Zeligman St, Crested Butte, CO 81224
608	Scott Trieshmann	po box 662, CO 81224 United States
609	Scott Wallis	PO Box 103, Crested Butte, CO 81224
610	Scott Wimmer	PO Box 938 Crested Butte CO 81224
611	Sean Gallup	Crested Butte CO 81224
612	Seth Tribbey	PO Box 591, Crested Butte, CO 81224
613	Shannon Kaminsky	PO Box 1051, Gunnison, CO 81230
614	Sharon Farrington	PO Box 1699, Crested Butte, CO 81224
615	Sharon Fulton	PO Box 3248, Crested Butte, CO 81224
616	Shay Hlavaty	81230
617	Shayn Estes	PO Box 1124, Crested Butte, CO 81224
618	Shelley Chancellor	PO. 2113, Crested Butte, Co. 81224 Gunnison
619	Shelley Popke	622 Teocalli 2A, Crested Butte, CO 81224 USA
620	Shelly Vogt	129 Sioux Rd, Gunnison, CO 81230
621	Sherron Green	PO Box 897, Crested Butte, CO 81224
622	Shirley Babler	PO Box 3063, Crested Butte, CO 81224
623	Shirley Vincent	1216 E. 28th Street, Tulsa, OK 74114 USA
624	Sierra Fairfield-Smith	PO Box 109, Silverthorne, CO 80498
625	Simon Christensen	6715 E Union Ave #141, Denver, CO 80207
626	Sophia Cinnamon	PO Box 2201, Crested Butte, CO 81224
627	Spencer Schenk-Wasson	619 N. Wisconsin, Gunnison, CO 81230
628	Stacy Clark	PO Box 2709, Crested Butte, CO 81224
629	Steph Timothy	699 Zeligman St, Crested Butte, CO 81224
630	Stephanie Aubert	615 A West New York Ave, Gunnison, CO 81230
631	Stephanie Hamilton	9242 Biscayne Blvd., Dallas, TX 75218
632	Stephaniw White	716 Elk Ave, PO Box 1431, Crested Butte, CO 81224 USA
633	Steve Jennison	Crested Butte CO 81224

634	Steve Semegen	41579 Calle Pampas, Indio, California 92203 USA
635	Steve Thompson	PO Box 2078, Crested Butte, CO 81224
636	Steven Bredford	446 Ludwig Dr, Bayfield, CO 81122
637	Stuart Bailey	7401 Albert Rd., Austin, TX 78745
638	Sue Navy	Box 432, Crested Butte, CO 81224 US
639	Sue Schappert	312 Shavano St., Crested Butte, CO 81224
640	Sue Williamson	33 Gillaspey Avenue, Crested Butte, CO 81224
641	Susan Chandler-Reed	2705 Stellar Ct, Montrose, CO 81401 USA
642	Susan Jeter	135 Fairview Rd., Little Rock, AR 72205
643	Susan Mol	po box 5398, mt. crested butte, colorado 81225 usa
644	Susan Tyzzer	14 Ruland Pl., Crested Butte,, CO. 81224 Gunnison
645	Susan Wallace	62 Barbra Place, Crested Butte, CO 81224
646	Susan Werner	65311 Solar Heights Ct., Montrose, CO 81403
647	Suzanne Clarke	PO Box 712, Paonia, CO 81428
648	Suzanne Hadley	PO Box 1995, Crested Butte, CO 81224
649	Suzette Gainous	PO Box 5780, Mt. Crested Butte, CO 81225
650	Sydney Schalit	330 W. Sackett Ave., Salida, CO 81201 USA
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Gunnison Public Lands Initiative

Business Endorsement

As business owners who live and work in Gunnison County, we recognize the crucial role that protected public lands play in the vibrancy of our local economy. Our tourist-based economy is dependent upon our high-quality surrounding public lands that provide some of the best hunting, angling, motorized recreation, skiing, mountain biking, as well as wildlife and wildflower viewing in the country.

Our ease of access to healthy rivers, pristine mountains, large networks of backcountry trails, and diverse wildlife habitats are why many people move to Gunnison County. It is also why many of us chose to start businesses here and why people visit in ever-growing numbers.

There is a large and growing body of peer-reviewed research that examines the relationship between natural amenities, land conservation, and local/regional economic well-being. In fact, according to a recent study in *The Journal of Regional Analysis and Policy,* the more protected public lands in a county, the higher the employment rate, population growth and per capita income. In addition, 15 percent of the per capita income in our county is attributed directly to protected public lands [1]. Protected public lands also increases the ability to recruit entrepreneurs, attract skilled workforce across a range of industries, and retain higher rates of job growth by attracting entrepreneurs and well-educated, skilled workers who want the high quality of life that comes from being surrounded by healthy public lands [2].

As business owners who represent a wide range of interests, we sincerely thank Senator Bennet for working with the local community to explore long-term lands protection for Gunnison County and urge Rep. Tipton and Senator Gardner to support the effort. We appreciate your foresight and recognition of the undeniable connection between a healthy environment and a healthy economy. When the time comes, we will work to support the passage of legislation that will help conserve land, preserve our communities' character and quality of life and thus ensure a flourishing, rural-mountain economy.

[1] Rasker, R., P.H. Gude, M. Delorey. In Review. The effect of protected federal lands on economic prosperity in the non-metropolitan West. *Journal of Regional Analysis and Policy.*

[2] "Headwaters Economics. 'Colorado's Economy and the Role of Federal Protected Lands'. https://headwaterseconomics.org/economic-development/trends-performance/colorados-economy-andprotected-lands

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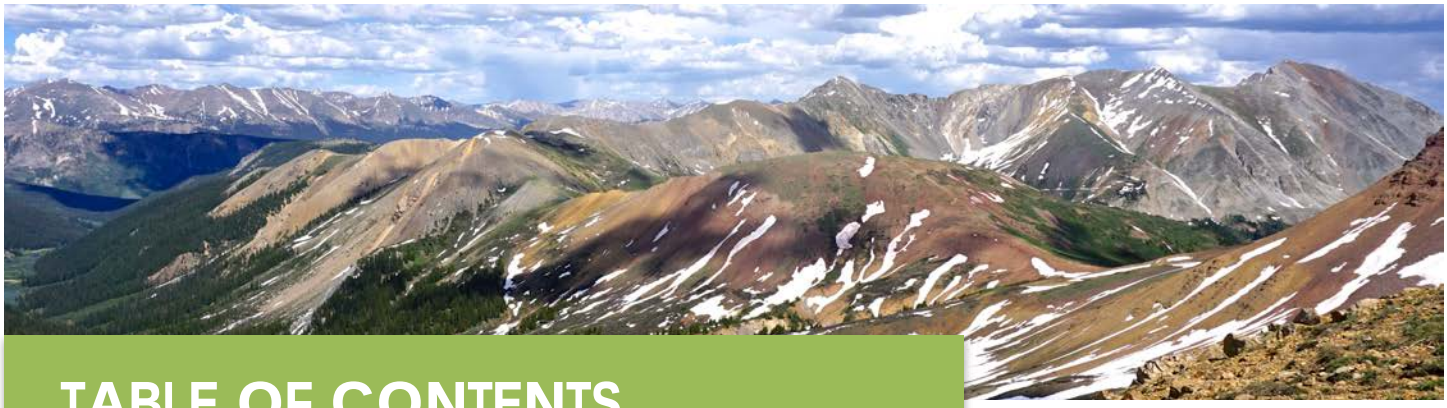
Gunnison Public Lands Initiative

Revised GPLI Proposal - January 2019

Photo Credits (clockwise): John Fielder, Bruce Allen, Peter Dopchev, Maddie Rehn



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Meeting Space

Gunnison County Courthouse

Gunnison Public Lands Initiative

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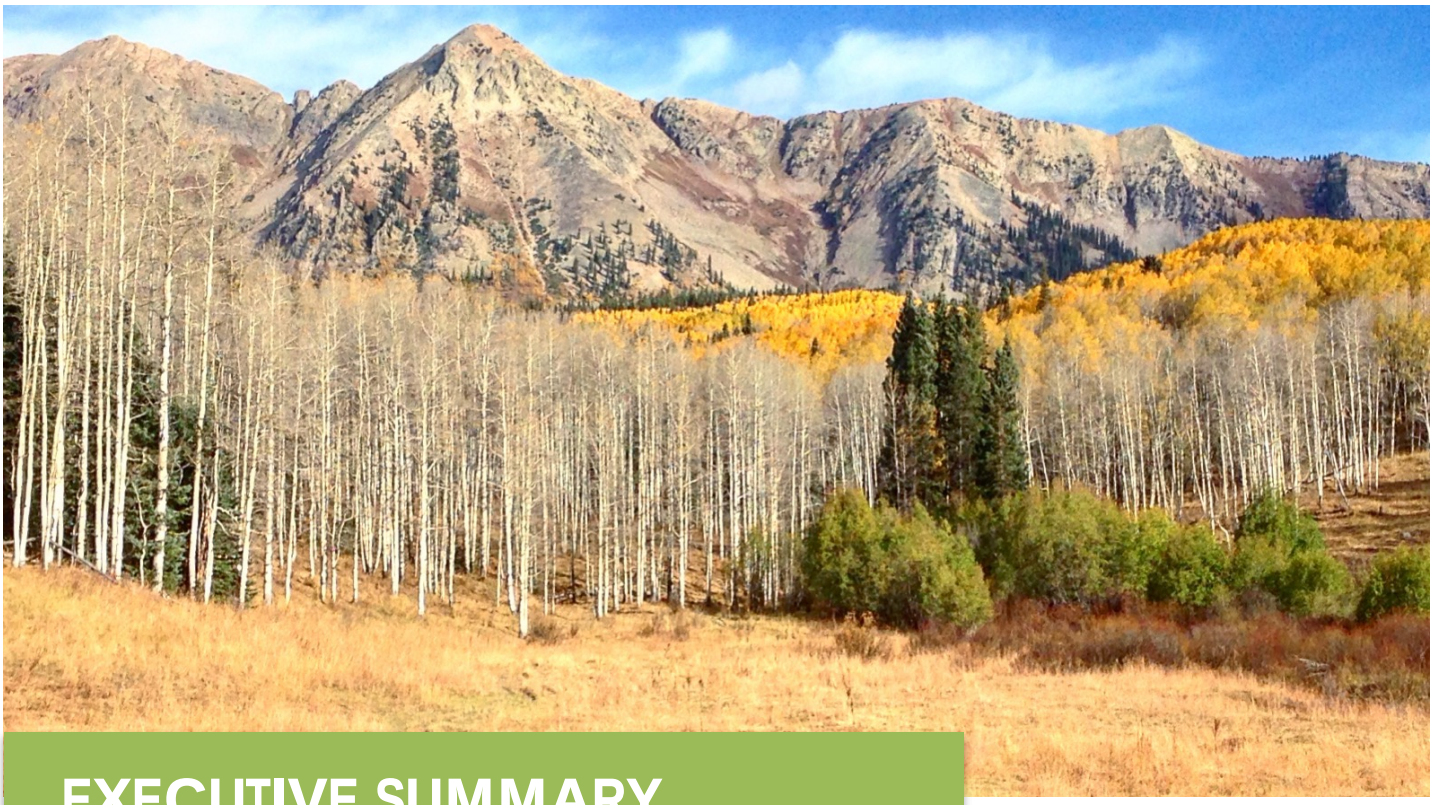
Report September 2018 - revisions by Maddie with editing from Marsha Porter-Norton and all the members of the GPLI.

Revised report written by Maddie Rehn with editing from Marsha Porter-Norton and all members of the Working Group. Released January 2019.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gunnison Public Lands Initiative (GPLI) is a coalition of stakeholders from ten community groups with interests including ranching, water resources, motorized use, conservation, mountain biking, hunting and angling. The coalition works in partnership with the Gunnison Board of County Commissioners and Senator Michael Bennet's office.

The GPLI released an initial proposal in June of 2017 after spending eighteen months, with the help of a professional facilitator, working to find common ground on public land protection measures in portions of Gunnison County. The GPLI's initial proposal was the culmination of conversations occurring in the county over the past six years to discuss how to best protect important public land values and uses in Gunnison County that would best serve our community's economy, environment, and quality-of-life into the future.

Every organization participating in the process has made compromises to craft a proposal that is supported by this diverse member group and the community.
The goal of the coalition is to protect public lands, enhance a strong and sustainable economy, and support historic uses of public lands. To accomplish this goal, the GPLI aims to create a successful designation that enjoys broad support, is technically sound, and best serves the community.

The GPLI has proposed that key public lands in and around the Gunnison Basin be protected as wilderness or special management areas. By using a range of designations, the proposal would conserve a broad set of public lands for recreation, water, grazing, science, wildlife, and other values.

The initial proposal released in June of 2017 represents many hours of work understanding current on-the-ground uses of our public lands and extensive collaboration to find solutions that could be supported by all group members.

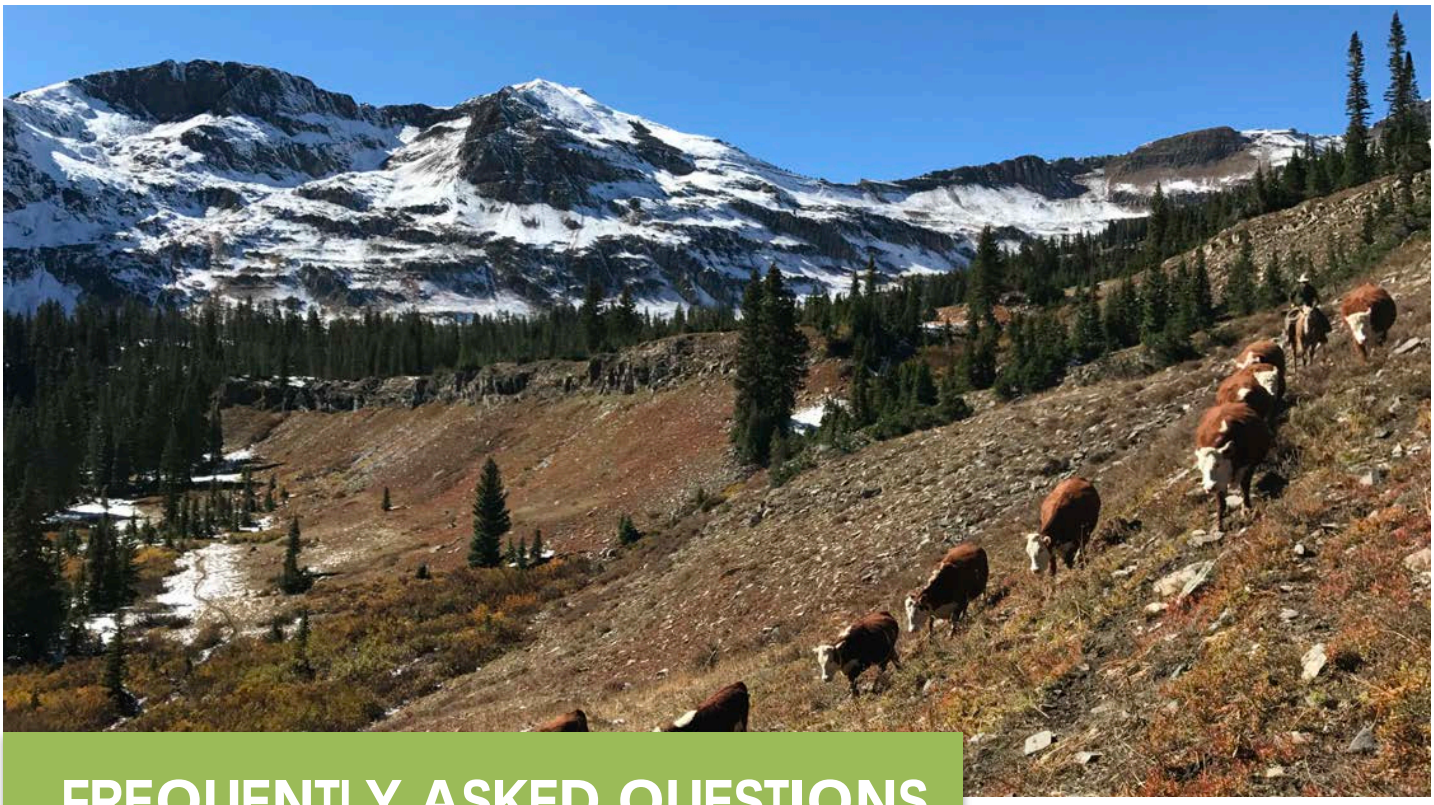
Since the initial proposal was released, the GPLI has been engaging the community and diverse stakeholders in conversations about the initial proposal and what it would mean for the future of our local public lands. Most of the proposed land designations were met with support when the initial proposal was released. Some areas of improvement and suggested changes were identified through community feedback, and the GPLI has refined the proposal based on that input.

Please see page 107 " Changes Integrated into the GPLI Proposal" for the specific recommendation page to see these revisions.

The GPLI group continues to meet regularly and is working through a few remaining modifications based on community and stakeholder input. These include areas previously noted in the initial report as 'Considered for SMA and/or Wilderness, To Be Vetted with Regional Communities'. The GPLI has been engaging with these regional communities and stakeholders to hear ideas and concerns. These are now identified in the report as 'Areas in Discussion'.

We will continue to have conversations regarding these areas and ideas. The GPLI has no intention of including any areas in its final proposal that are not based on public participation and appropriate analysis. The process for refining the remaining 'Areas in Discussion' is continuing.

At the same time, the GPLI is proud to make a consensus recommendation that 452,221 acres of public lands be protected in and around the Gunnison Basin. The GPLI has shared these recommendations with the Forest Service for its consideration as it revises the land management plan for the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests and looks forward to seeing these recommendations drafted into federal legislation. This community proposal reflects the common ground among all of the diverse coalition members.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Gunnison Public Lands Initiative (GPLI)?

The Gunnison Public Lands Initiative is a coalition of ten member organizations that are proactively considering how to help guide the management of key public lands in portions of Gunnison County for our economy, environment, and quality of life into the future.

Why did it form?

The GPLI formed in response to ongoing efforts to protect public lands in Gunnison County. The goal of the GPLI is to create and see the implementation of a long-term vision for the future of the Gunnison County public lands.

The GPLI stakeholders recognized the need for a robust community conversation that included a broad range of voices about the future of public lands in Gunnison County.

Who are the members of the GPLI?

The GPLI includes stakeholders from ten community groups who work in partnership with the Gunnison Board of County Commissioners and Senator Michael Bennet's office. Interests represented include ranching, water resources, motorized recreation, conservation, mountain biking, hunting and angling.

Specific organizations with representatives on the GPLI coalition are:

- Backcountry Hunters and Anglers,
- Crested Butte Mountain Bike Association,
- Gunnison County Stockgrowers,
- Gunnison County Sno Trackers,
- Gunnison Trails,
- Gunnison Valley O.H.V. Alliance of Trailriders (GOATs),
- High Country Conservation Advocates,
- The Wilderness Society,
- Trout Unlimited,
- Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District.

When joining the GPLI these representatives agreed to reach out to other organizations and individuals to ensure that their feedback was included in the process.

Members were tasked with thinking about public lands holistically, and from a community perspective, while also ensuring that their user groups were represented.

What is the goal of GPLI?

The goal of the GPLI is to create a successful legislative proposal for public land designation that enjoys broad support, is technically sound, and best serves the community and the general public into the future.

How did the group make decisions?

The GPLI made all its recommendations and decisions by consensus, meaning that all members of the group support the work in this proposal and the overall package of recommendations made. The GPLI meetings took place monthly for more than a year to develop the initial proposal recommendations. The GPLI continues to meet regularly and meetings are open to the public.

What are the proposal recommendations?

The GPLI recommends that key public lands in and around Gunnison County that provide exceptional recreational, wildlife, natural, grazing, scenic, scientific and water values be permanently protected. The recommendations use multiple types of permanent public land protection tools to best meet community objectives, including wilderness and special management areas. The report describes a number of final areas of agreement, which have been refined from the GPLI's initial recommendations as a result of community feedback, as well as "Areas In Discussion".

For the Areas of Agreement, this proposal:

- Does not close any roads or trails that are currently open; existing trail uses would remain essentially the same.
- Allows future trail projects to be considered for construction and management through standard agency decision making by the BLM and Forest Service.
- Does not affect popular over the snow riding areas.
- Balances interests in motorized, mechanized, and quiet recreational uses.
- Ensures that current ranching operations and water use can continue.
- Protects critical habitat for species such as mule deer and elk, while providing flexibility for habitat restoration projects for species such as bighorn sheep and Gunnison sage-grouse.

What is a special management area? What is wilderness?

Special management areas (SMAs) provide permanent legislative direction for special management of public lands to protect and provide for important conservation, recreation, and scientific values and uses. For example, SMAs can be designated to provide outstanding opportunities for a particular suite of recreational activities that helps to avoid conflicts between users. SMAs can also focus on the conservation of rare species or critical habitat, for example.

Wilderness is the most protective designation of national public lands, ensuring that certain public lands will remain undeveloped and natural. Wilderness provides outstanding habitat for wildlife, some of the best opportunities for hunting and fishing, strong watershed protections, and excellent backcountry recreation. Motorized, mechanized, and industrial uses are restricted in wilderness. Detailed information regarding wilderness law and policy is available at: www.wilderness.net/NWPS/WhatIsWilderness.

By using special management areas and wilderness, the GPLI was able to protect a greater variety of lands for water, wildlife, recreation, and other important values and uses.

What are some reasons to protect public lands?

Gunnison County is growing and changing. Healthy public lands are critical for sustaining our strong economy, high-quality of life, ranching heritage, excellent recreational opportunities, abundant wildlife, clean air and water, incredible views, and intact landscapes.

How will this proposal impact recreation on public lands? Will any roads or trails be closed?

Within the current areas of agreement, no roads or trails will be closed by the GPLI proposal. Existing trail use in these area would not be changed by the GPLI proposal and certain future trails can still be considered for construction and management through standard agency decision making by the BLM and Forest Service. The GPLI worked diligently to balance interests in motorized, mechanized, and quiet recreational uses.

How will this proposal impact water and ranching?

The GPLI recognizes the value of our water resources and local ranches in Gunnison County. The areas proposed for protection in the GPLI, including wilderness and special management areas, will be subject to all valid existing rights. All aspects of the proposal honor existing grazing permits, water rights and supporting facilities such as stock ponds, ditches and other permitted special uses, valid mining rights, outfitter and guide permits, and other existing infrastructure.

The GPLI intends that any future legislation stemming from this proposal would include the Congressional Grazing Guidelines, which clearly state that "there shall be no curtailment of grazing permits or privileges in an area simply because it is designated as wilderness".[1] These guidelines assure ranchers that their ability to graze and maintain their supporting facilities (e.g., head gates, ditches, stock tanks, and fences) will be protected – including water rights. The GPLI supports local ranching operations and has been careful to protect this use in the proposal.

How will this proposal address issues like overuse, trail and travel management, grazing management, or permitting for outfitters?

While these are important management issues for public lands, the GPLI focused specifically on the permanent protection of key public lands in and around Gunnison County. The proposed designations will help focus management on key public lands for important recreational, cultural, natural, scientific, grazing and other values, but issues such as overuse, trail and travel management, grazing management, permitting for outfitters, and other land management decisions will continue to be addressed through the agencies' land management planning processes.

Grazing, outfitting permits, trail maintenance, and many other activities will continue in the areas proposed for designation.

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[1] Appendix A of the report of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the House of Representatives accompanying H.R. 2570 of the 101st Congress (H. Rept. 101–405). House Report 96–617 to accompany H.R. 5487 of the 96th Congress.

What does “Areas in Discussion” mean?

There were several potential areas for designation identified in the initial report as “Considered for Special Management Area and/or Wilderness, to be vetted with regional communities”. These are areas in and around the Gunnison Basin that GPLI is evaluating and discussing. These mostly include landscapes where a trail system, watershed, river, stream, or geographic formation crosses political lines. The GPLI has long acknowledged the need to have a more in-depth conversations with regional stakeholders and counties about these areas to fully understand on-the-ground conditions, ideas related to local values, concerns and land uses, and potential ideas for suitable designations that would have support in the surrounding areas.

Over the past year, the GPLI has been consulting with regional stakeholders for these areas and continues to work on public participation and appropriate analyses. The GPLI will continue to work with regional stakeholders toward final recommendations for these areas in the months ahead. These areas remain under discussion and may or may not be included in the GPLI’s final proposal.

What does “ Areas considered, not included at this time” mean?

There were several potential areas for designation identified in the initial report as “Considered for Special Management Area and/or Wilderness, to be vetted with regional communities”. Some of those remain ‘Areas in Discussion’ but the GPLI has decided not to include others in the proposal at this time. These areas have not been included at this time for a variety of reason, such as uncertainty over future management, the need for a longer-term engagement with local communities, or unresolved management objectives. As such, the GPLI will not be pursuing these areas in its recommendations. The GPLI is open to consideration of these proposals in the future if the dynamics change and a well vetted and broadly supported recommendation is developed.

How can I get involved in the GPLI or submit a comment on the proposal?

The GPLI is releasing this revised proposal after years of discussion, hard-won compromises, robust public outreach, and extensive research into Gunnison County public lands. This proposal is a reflection of that work.

If you want to get involved or have feedback on this proposal, please reach out to any member of the coalition or email your thoughts to info@gunnisonpubliclands.org, or visit www.gunnisonpubliclands.org/provide-feedback.

What are the next steps for this proposal?

The GPLI plans to continue to engage the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, participate in the GMUG land management plan revision process and begin the process of developing a legislative proposal that includes the 'Areas of Agreement'. There is still going conversations regarding the 'Areas in Discussion', as well as exploring community interest including protections from oil and gas development within the Ohio Creek Valley and in advancing potential opportunities to protect Gunnison sage-grouse habitat.

ABOUT GUNNISON COUNTY

Photo: Dave Kozlowski

Located in the Southern Rocky Mountains on the Western Slope of Colorado, Gunnison County is home to over 15,000 people. With a several municipalities ranging in size from 1,000 to 6,000 residents, Gunnison County is a true Western landscape.[2] Snow packed mountains give way to rushing waters, including the Gunnison River – one of the major tributaries of the Colorado River. These rivers supply water for drinking, environmental, commercial, cultural, and recreational uses.[3] Elevations range from

[2] The United States Census Bureau. Gunnison Colorado. Available at: https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/08051

[3] Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District. "The Gunnison River Basin – A Handbook for Inhabitants" Available at: http://ugrwcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/GB-Handbook-2013.pdf

7,500 feet to 14,000 feet, hosting a varied landscape ranging from desert sagebrush to old-growth forest to high alpine tundra.

Image: http://www.worldatlas.com/na/us/co/c-gunnison-county-colorado.html

Gunnison County covers 2.1 million acres, and of that 1.7 million are federal public lands owned by all Americans. The United States Forest Service manages 1.3 million acres of this public land and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages an additional 353,454 acres. In addition, the National Park Service holds over 32,000 acres of land.[4] Collectively these federal public lands account for 72% of the land ownership in Gunnison County. [5]

The County has three major hubs, Mt. Crested Butte, Crested Butte, and Gunnison – which is the County seat. Gunnison County is also home to the smaller towns of Marble, Pitkin, Ohio City, and Somerset. Residents and visitors value maintaining open space for the protection of scenery, wildlife habitat, rich ranching heritage, and world-class recreation opportunities.[6]

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[4] The One Valley Prosperity Project. "State of Valley Report" Available at: http://www.onevalleyprosperity.com/document/state-valley-report

[5] Gunnison County, Colorado. "Area Information". Available at: https://www.gunnisoncounty.org/618/Area-Information

[6] Gunnison County. "Gunnison County Economic Indicators Report". August 2014: Available at: http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/DocumentCenter/View/3453

ABOUT GUNNISON PUBLIC LANDS INITIATIVE

Recognizing the need for a collaborative conversation about public lands protection, the Gunnison Board of County Commissioners convened the Gunnison Working Group for Public Lands ("the Working Group") in early 2016. The Working Group met monthly through February 2016 to June 2017 to craft a public lands proposal - based on consensus - that would protect community values, take into account the various needs of user groups, and provide long-lasting stability to important public lands in and around Gunnison County. The initial report was released in June of 2017 as the product of those conversations. The Working Group also agreed that, moving forward, all organizations would collaborate and together be a coalition under the name of Gunnison Public Lands Initiative.

The GPLI is the outgrowth of conversation that have been occurring since 2012 about protecting public lands in and around the Gunnison Basin. At that time, Senator Bennet listened to local groups' interests in the future of public lands and encouraged broader discussions saying, "any conversation about managing Gunnison County public lands must begin with the voices of the local community - those who live here, who know the land, and whose economic future depends on these areas"[7].

The GPLI originated as a collaborative among the Crested Butte Mountain Biking Association, Gunnison Trails, High Country Conservation Advocates, the International Mountain Biking Association, and The Wilderness Society. Soon after, in 2014, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers and Trout Unlimited submitted proposals for potential public lands protections to Senator Bennet's office. The Gunnison County Sno Trackers and the Gunnison O.H.V. Alliance of Trailriders (GOATs) submitted feedback on the GPLI proposal in 2014.

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[7] Bennet Begins Community Conversation to Protect Public Lands at Oh Be Joyful Campground. https://www.bennet.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2012/7/bennet-begins-community-conversation-to-protect-gunnison-public-lands-at-oh-be-joyful-campground

In light of the diverse interests expressed by these groups, the Gunnison Board of County Commissioners and US Senator Bennet's Office encouraged the community to work together to create a single proposal that would be representative of the community's vision for the future of public lands in and around Gunnison County. To deepen and broaden the community conversation, the Working Group formed in February 2016 and was tasked with creating a single, consensus proposal encompassing aspects of the three original proposals and associated comments. This report is the result of the GPLI's efforts since 2016 to find consensus on a unified community proposal.

While there are many forms of protections for public lands, the GPLI has solely focused on congressional-level designations for key public lands in portions of the Gunnison County landscape. There are two primary types of congressional designations: wilderness and special management areas (SMAs). Wilderness is a congressional designation that provides opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation on public lands and permanently protects their natural, undeveloped, and 'untrammeled' character. Wilderness designation is the highest form of protection and prohibits new mining and oil and gas drilling, while generally restricting commercial timber harvest and motorized and mechanized use. SMAs permanently protect public lands for a variety of uses and values identified by the community and reflected in the legislation, but typically prevent new road building and mineral development. They can be tailored to allow a wider variety of recreational uses or to focus management on particular uses or values, such as wildlife or watershed protection. More information about wilderness and special management areas can be found in the 'Frequently Asked Questions' section.

Establishing Wilderness areas and SMAs requires an Act of Congress. The group discussed these two tools in the context of multiple values, including economic, traditional, ecological, scientific, and recreational uses. The protections entail opportunities and implications for local public lands and communities, but they also provide the same communities with ability to determine the future they want for public lands in and around Gunnison County. These designations help to protect the baseline conditions and determine future management necessary to preserve the integrity of the landscape and its uses for generations to come. In its deliberations, the GPLI considered questions like: What are the best ways to balance multiple uses? Are there areas on our landscape that are unsuitable for industrial uses? Are there places that should be preserved without roads? Are there locations that have outstanding habitat or rare species that should be managed for wildlife? Should some areas emphasize sustainable recreation? Should some places be restricted to future development of some forms of recreation? How can we best protect our public lands while also protecting grazing, water development, and other traditional uses of our public lands?

The GPLI did not directly address travel management, overuse, dispersed camping, grazing allotments, trail and campsite maintenance, or permitting issues. These are complex and ever-changing issues that require a level of detail that is generally beyond the scope of legislative designations and are best left to the federal land management

agencies' administrative processes. Citizens interested in these issues should consider reaching out to the BLM and Forest Service to see how they can be involved.

Ground Rules and Decision-Making

The Gunnison Working Group for Public Lands was convened by the Gunnison Board of County Commissioners, with the help of Senator Michael Bennet's Office. These two bodies invited select Gunnison County community members to attend based on their leadership within public lands interest groups and engagement on public lands issues. Many more public lands leaders and interest groups are present in the Gunnison Valley than were part of the Working Group - now known as the Gunnison Public Lands Initiative.

The GPLI was designed to be a small - yet comprehensive - forum, inclusive of public lands interests representing recreation, grazing, water, environmental, and economic. The GPLI members were asked to speak to the larger represented interest, not solely their own user group. The GPLI realizes that its work is a start to a larger community conversation about public lands.

The GPLI hired a professional facilitator from Durango, Colorado, to coordinate meetings and ensure that all voices were heard.

The GPLI agreed to the following ground rules for all of its discussions:

- Only one person speaks at a time.
- Respect all opinions even if you do not agree with them; do express your opinions.
- Focus on solutions, not positions.
- Be prepared and show up ready to go.
- Be punctual.
- Maintain strong communication with group members and organizations/ community members outside of the GPLI

The group also agreed to operate on consensus. The group abided by the following principles of consensus:

- All voices are heard and considered.
- Differences of opinion are natural and expected.
- The group works in good faith to reach a decision all can support.
- Group members do not have to like every aspect of every decision, but they must support the overall decisions of the group.

Roles of the Gunnison Public Lands Initiative

In its first few meetings, the GPLI approved the following group roles.

Member of the Group

Responsible for attending meetings preparing ahead of time, participating in good faith, and reporting back to their groups/constituencies. Members will agree to participate in respectful dialogue following the ground rules set by the group and will seek to find solutions that meet the needs of a diversity of interests. Members can contribute funding at any level but that is a not a requirement to participate.

Ex Officio Members

This role is reserved for any Government entity that participates who may choose to be an advisor in an "Ex Officio" role. This is a non-voting role.

Community Stakeholders

Groups and citizens throughout the community and broader publics will be consulted and included in this process. The public lands bill will need widespread community support from all affected stakeholders to be successful.

Convener of the Process

The convener of the process is Gunnison County. This does not obligate the County to any position. The County is in a role of bringing the interests together and calling the meeting(s).

Funds Administrator

The Gunnison Public Lands Initiative (GPLI) is responsible for raising the funding and finalizing the contract with the facilitator and note taker, for handling logistics, and reviewing invoices and paying bills.

Fiscal Agent

Western Colorado University (WCU): The GPLI utilizes Western Colorado University as their fiscal agent and has an agreement in place with GPLI for this project. WCU is the actual place where the funds are housed. Western will have no influence in the outcomes of the group.

Policy
US Senator Michael Bennet. The role of Senator Bennet is to carry forward the community's wishes if and when it is appropriate.

Facilitator
Marsha Porter-Norton. Her role is to moderate the process, be neutral, provide consultation and assistance about group process steps, and to help the group with the discussion(s). Mrs. Porter-Norton will also help secure information the Work Group requests with help from members and others, and working within the budget.

Goal of the GPLI

After an initial discussion of the issues at stake with a public lands proposal, the GPLI approved a goals statement to guide their decision-making. The goals statement reads as follows:

Knowing that Gunnison County is growing and changing rapidly, the Gunnison Public Lands Initiative is proactively considering how to protect public lands in order to sustain our economy, environment, and quality of life in Gunnison County into the future.

The goal of the GPLI is to create a successful legislative proposal for public land designation that enjoys broad support, is technically sound, and best serves the community and the general public into the future.

The GPLI is guided by the following principles:

- **Appropriate balance between the wilderness, recreational, wildlife, ecological, economic, cultural, and scenic values of public lands;**
- **Support for a strong, sustainable economy in Gunnison County;**
- **Respect for historic uses of public lands;**
- **Use of the best available science and all relevant information;**
- **Desire to find workable solutions for all interests.**

Photo: Mitch Warnick

THE GPLI PROCESS

Phase One - The Sweep and Research

The group reviewed all of the areas that had been originally proposed by Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Trout Unlimited, and the former Gunnison Public Lands Initiative. The group compared the areas and designation recommendations made in each proposal.

The discussion was focused on the issues, desires, and concerns each member saw with areas proposed for designation. As not all members submitted proposals prior to the start of the process, particular attention was paid to ensure that the entire group understood others' ideas for the proposal areas, as well as the Gunnison County landscape as a whole. These discussions were recorded in the meeting minutes and in a "Discussion Tracking" document.

During this process, the group used digital maps with various 'layers', including topography, roads, water structures, and existing and proposed trails. The GPLI also discussed information about the location of wildlife and sensitive species, reviewed scientific articles on wildlife/recreation interactions, and considered the entire range of natural resource, management and cultural issues and values of the landscape, including timber, minerals, recreation, economics, wildlife, wildfire, science, watersheds, and climate change

At the end of the sweep, the GPLI crafted the goals statement.

Phase Two – Consensus Building on Individual Areas

After identifying the primary issues, opportunities, desires, and concerns in the sweep, the GPLI began to make decisions about what it would recommend for designation for each area that had been initially proposed. Options discussed for recommendation included no designation for the area, a designation matching the recommendation in the three original proposals, or a designation with changes from those original proposals. In several cases, the GPLI discussed proposal areas that were not included in the original proposals.

Using consensus-based decision making, the GPLI made a recommendation for each proposal area, using the following procedural steps.

1. Quick review of the area and applicable map.
2. Review information requests from the 'sweep' and discuss any new information.
3. Review everyone's interests.
4. Brainstorm proposals and compromises. List them. Discuss them.
5. Review a list of goals or desired aims for each area. Examples could be: protect big game habitat; ensure winter recreation; keep opportunity open for a specific trail; retain Gold Medal Trout fishery; ensure grazers have access to their allotments, etc.

Knowing that some proposal areas would have a greater level of agreement than others, the GPLI categorized potential proposals according to the level of agreement amongst the groups. Three categorizes were used to gauge and record the group's thoughts on various proposals. The categories were:

> *Category 1*: We have full consensus on this proposal.
> *Category 2:* We have achieved a relative high level of agreement but minor adjustments need to be made.
> *Category 3:* We were not able to reach any agreement on this area. We suggest a next step as being [X].

This system was used to gauge and record the group's thoughts on various proposals. Oftentimes, the process described above and categories were used iteratively, with proposal areas being put in Category 3 for the first discussion and slowly moving up to Category 1, as changes were made and discussed again at subsequent meetings.

Phase Three - Initial Recommendation Package

After discussing each area individually, making a recommendation, and ensuring the group agreed that all areas in the proposal - beyond the identified areas in the 'to be vetted' category - had consensus, the GPLI spent several meetings discussing its recommendations as a final package.

The GPLI addressed outstanding concerns, looked at the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal as a whole, and finalized its recommendation. During this time, each group solicited feedback from their membership, with maps. With the support of their membership, each of the GPLI members agreed to the proposal package.

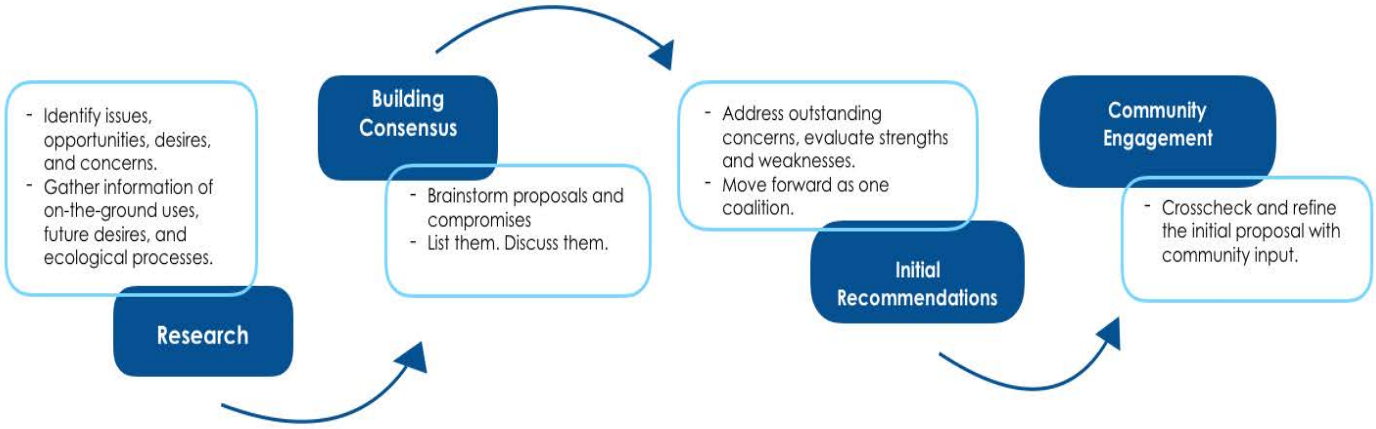
Phase Four – Community Engagement

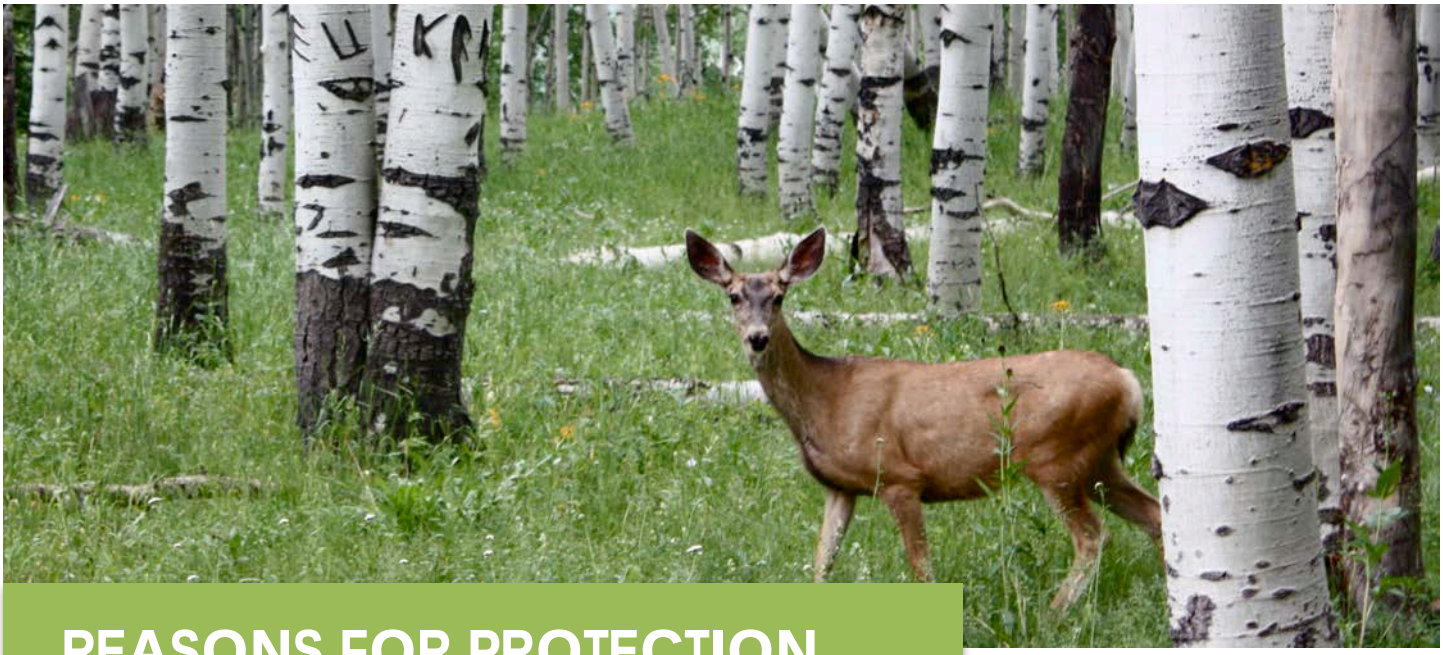
Phase Four began the process of gathering public input on the initial proposal. In this phase, the GPLI expanded its solicitation of feedback for the proposal area in and around Gunnison County. This subsequently led to further work to find compromises, boundary or designation adjustments, and in some cases, the addition of new details and language to recommendations to make them more accurate.

After robust public engagement, the GPLI thoroughly considered the feedback, made changes to the initial proposal, and arrived at a consensus of many of the areas, including all those in the Gunnison Basin. Please see page 107 "Changes Integrated into the GPLI Initial Proposal' for more specifics.

At the present time (early winter 2018), there are still some areas that are under discussion. Work to address those areas will continue.

The GPLI will share this report with the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management and begin the process of developing a legislative proposal that includes the 'Areas of Agreement'. At the same time, outreach and refinement will continue for the 'Areas in Discussion' for potential inclusion in the legislative proposal. The GPLI ultimately hopes the revised forest plan for for the GMUG National Forest will reflect this proposal and that the legislation will be enacted to accomplish the permanent protections contemplated.





REASONS FOR PROTECTION

The Gunnison Public Lands Initiative formed to discuss the future of key public lands in Gunnison County. Gunnison County is the fifth largest county in Colorado, and 72% of the lands within county lines are publicly owned.[8] The United States Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and National Park Service (NPS) manage lands in Gunnison County.

Gunnison County is growing and changing. By the year 2050, the State Demographer estimates our population will have grown to over 23,000, an almost 50% increase from the 2015 population. The State of Colorado's population will increase even more greatly in the same time period, growing almost 70% to over 8.5 million.[9]

This increase in population in Colorado will correspond with greater tourist visitation and greater variety of users coming to recreate on public lands in Gunnison County. While the Town of Crested Butte has a year-round population of only 1,500, a popular trailhead outside of town receives approximately 50,000 visits between May 15th and September 15th.[10] Healthy public lands and the amenities they provide are the economic foundation of Gunnison County, but increased use associated with demographic changes can have unintended consequences to the land and we are already starting to see this shift.

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[8] Gunnison County, Colorado. "Area Information". Available at: https://www.gunnisoncounty.org/618/Area-Information

[9] Colorado Department of Local Affairs. 'Population Totals for Colorado Counties'. Available online: https://demography.dola.colorado.gov/population/population-totals-counties/#population-totals-for-colorado-counties

[10] U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Gunnison Field Office. 'Oh-Be-Joyful Campground Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act Site Business Plan'. Available online: https://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/co/field_offices/gunnison_field_office/homepage.Par.31211.File.dat/Oh%20Be%20Joyful%20REA%20-%20%20Fee%20Demo%20Site%20Business%20Plan_WO_Final_2_16.pdf

The Gunnison Basin has been identified as one of the state's largest and most important potential conservation areas, in part because it hosts the world's largest remaining habitat and population of Gunnison sage-grouse. We also have exceptional habitat for big game and some of the state's most productive game units.[11] The streams in Gunnison County are habitat for the globally rare Colorado River cutthroat trout.[12] For these and many other species, it is important to protect habitat, especially in the face of a changing climate.

Ranching, an early industry of the Gunnison Valley, continues to play an important role in the local economy and culture. With that industry's close ties to public lands, there needs to be thoughtful consideration to ensure ranching remains viable and feasible. Extractive uses, including timber, natural gas, and coal exist on some lands within the County, and identifying and prioritizing the conservation of sensitive lands and sustainable recreation helps to protect those and other values from the impacts associated with extractive development.

The GPLI was tasked with thinking about a long-term vision for public lands. The group discussed what it values about our natural landscape currently and what it hopes for the future. While the GPLI members had different priorities on public lands, particularly for the type, location, and amount of recreational use, it found significant areas of common ground.

Generally, the GPLI agreed that it valued the backcountry feel of our landscape. The GPLI also felt that some lands should remain undeveloped — without roads, natural gas, commercial timber cutting, or mining. Protecting existing ranching and water use were also priorities for the GPLI.

In areas where GPLI members felt that there were conflicting public lands values and priorities (such as the desire to retain unfragmented wildlife habitat and the desire to build trails), it did their best to balance these values. Attempts to balance uses included making protections for some areas more stringent, while providing more relaxed guidelines on others, and making allowances in the proposed legislation so that the land management agencies could make decisions about use at a later date.

Some of the reasons the GPLI discussed for protecting public lands are listed in the following pages.

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[11] Colorado Parks and Wildlife. "Herd Management Plan". Available online: http://cpw.state.co.us/thingstodo/Pages/HerdManagementPlans.aspx

[12] Colorado State University, Colorado Natural Heritage Program. " CNHP Potential Conservation Areas and Reports Page'. Available online: http://www.cnhp.colostate.edu/download/gis/pca_reports.asp

RECREATION

Photo: Petar Dopchev

Gunnison County is known for its highly accessible world-class recreation. The landscape supports a broad variety of recreational uses including horseback riding, dirt biking, mountain biking, hiking, backcountry skiing, snowmobiling, and many more. Motorized, mechanized, and quiet recreation all attract large numbers of local users and visitors to the local public lands.

Outdoor recreation, and the health and quality-of-life benefits it provides, are often a primary reason why people choose to live in Gunnison County. Gunnison County residents have lower rates of hypertension and obesity than the state of Colorado as a whole. Ninety-five percent (95%) of Gunnison County residents have opportunities to exercise.[13]

Recreation also fuels our economy, with outdoor recreation businesses lining the downtowns of Gunnison and Crested Butte, and tourists choosing to visit the area for the opportunity to explore our public lands. On a statewide and local level outdoor recreation is a significant economic driver.[14]

Figure 1: Outdoor Industry Association calculations for the economic contributions from outdoor recreation in the state of Colorado. [14]

[13] Gunnison County 'State of the Valley Report". Available online: http://www.onevalleyprosperity.com/document/state-valley-report

[14] Outdoor Industry Association. Colorado Outdoor Recreation Economy Report. Available online: https://outdoorindustry.org/state/colorado/

Across Colorado, off-highway vehicle recreation was estimated to generate $914 million in direct sales in 2014-2015.[15] A more recent study by the Outdoor Industry Association, shows that outdoor recreation in Gunnison's Congressional District - D3 - is home to at least 241 outdoor companies and residents spend $2.19 billion where as out of state visitors spend $12.8 billion on outdoor recreation.[16]

Regionally, a report released by the Outdoor Alliance in November 2018, shows that paddlers, climbers, hikers, skiers, and mountain bikers who visit the Grand Mesa, Uncompaghre, and Gunnison National Forest generate more than $445.9 million in annual visitor spending. This economic activity helps support 5,802 full time jobs equalling almost $80 million in wages.[17] This aligns with a report released in February 2017 showing Gunnison has the highest fishing economic impact - including retail sales, salaries, jobs and tax revenues - of any Congressional district in the state.[18]

According to a public survey in 2014 by the Colorado Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCOPR), over 70% of Coloradans said that long-term management and planning was a high or essential priority for public recreation lands.[19] The SCORP report was updated January 2019 and states, "Coloradorans' recreation participation and priorities have not changed markedly since 2014".[20]

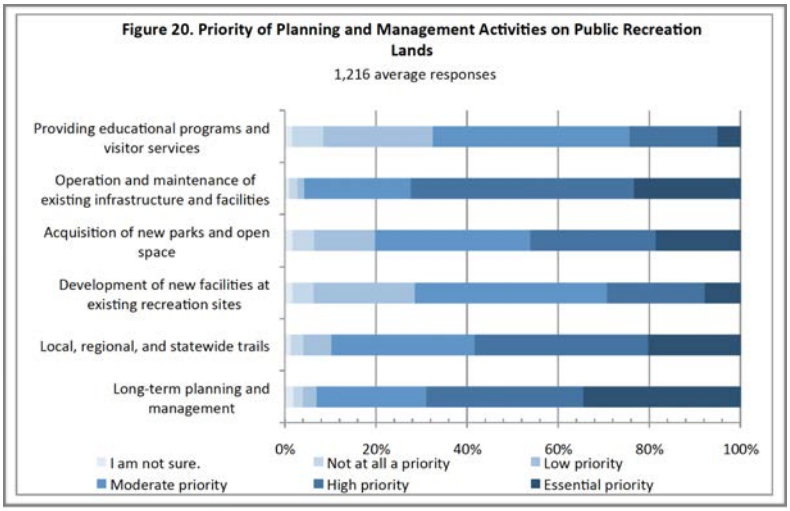

Figure 2: Data from the 2014 Colorado Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan - a statewide partnership led by Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

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[15] Pinyon Environmental. 'Economic Contribution of Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation in Colorado'. Available online: http://www.coloradotpa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/2014-15Season-OHV_Study-ExecSummary.pdf

[16] Outdoor Industry Association, Colorado 3rd Congressional District Report. Available oneline: https://outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/congressionaldata/COLORADO/OIA-ConDist-Colorado_3.pdf

[17] The Economic Influence of Human Powered Recreation in the Colorado's Grand Mesa, Uncomaphgre, & Gunnison National Forests. Available online: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54aabb14e4b01142027654ee/t/5bf3227e4d7a9c2442522bec/1542660737208/OA_GMUGNF_SharePiece.pdf

[18] Southwick Associates. "Economic Contributions of Recreational Fishing: U.S. Congressional Districts:. Available online: http://asafishing.org/wp-content/uploads/ASA-Congressional-District-Fishing-Impacts-Report-115th-Congress.pdf

[19] Colorado Parks and Wildlife. "The 2014 Colorado Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan". Available online: http://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/Trails/SCORP/SCORPOnlineReport.pdf

[20] The 2019 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. Available online: http://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/Trails/SCORP/2019_SCORP_MainReport.pdf

No matter the user group, public lands in Gunnison County provide unique outdoor recreation opportunities, not only because of their vastness and variety, but also because they offer intact, backcountry terrain in close proximity to local population centers.

GPLI members with a primary interest of biking desired these goals in the recommendations:

- Utilize local groups' trail master plans in planning the GPLI's proposal.
- Strengthen the local economy through trail use by many types of trail users, including hiking and mechanized uses.
- Honor critical seasonal areas for wildlife, recognizing that outside of these seasons, the need to protect an area with more restrictive tools likely diminishes.
- Encourage responsible trail development and work to ensure priority future trail opportunities.

GPLI members with a primary interest of motorized use desired these goals in the recommendations:

- Ensure areas are kept open for motorized use.
- Relieve congestion at trailheads and in other heavily used areas of the county.
- Strengthen the local economy through motorized recreation uses.

GPLI members with a primary interest of quiet use desired these goals in the recommendations:

- Protect areas that currently experience primarily quiet use.
- Ensure that future recreation growth does not threaten current quiet use areas.
- Protect the public lands that have wilderness characteristics: natural, undeveloped, outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.
- Provide for future human psychological needs that include preserving opportunities for solitude and for connection with natural landscapes.

Local information on recreation used by the GPLI:

- Existing roads and trails and their uses, according to the 2010 Travel Management Plan.
- Proposed trails from Gunnison Trails and the Crested Butte Mountain Bike Association.
- Locations of over-the-snow use from the Sno-Trackers and GOATS.
- Information on quiet use from the Friends Hut and Silent Tracks.
- Best available science on wildlife/recreation interactions.

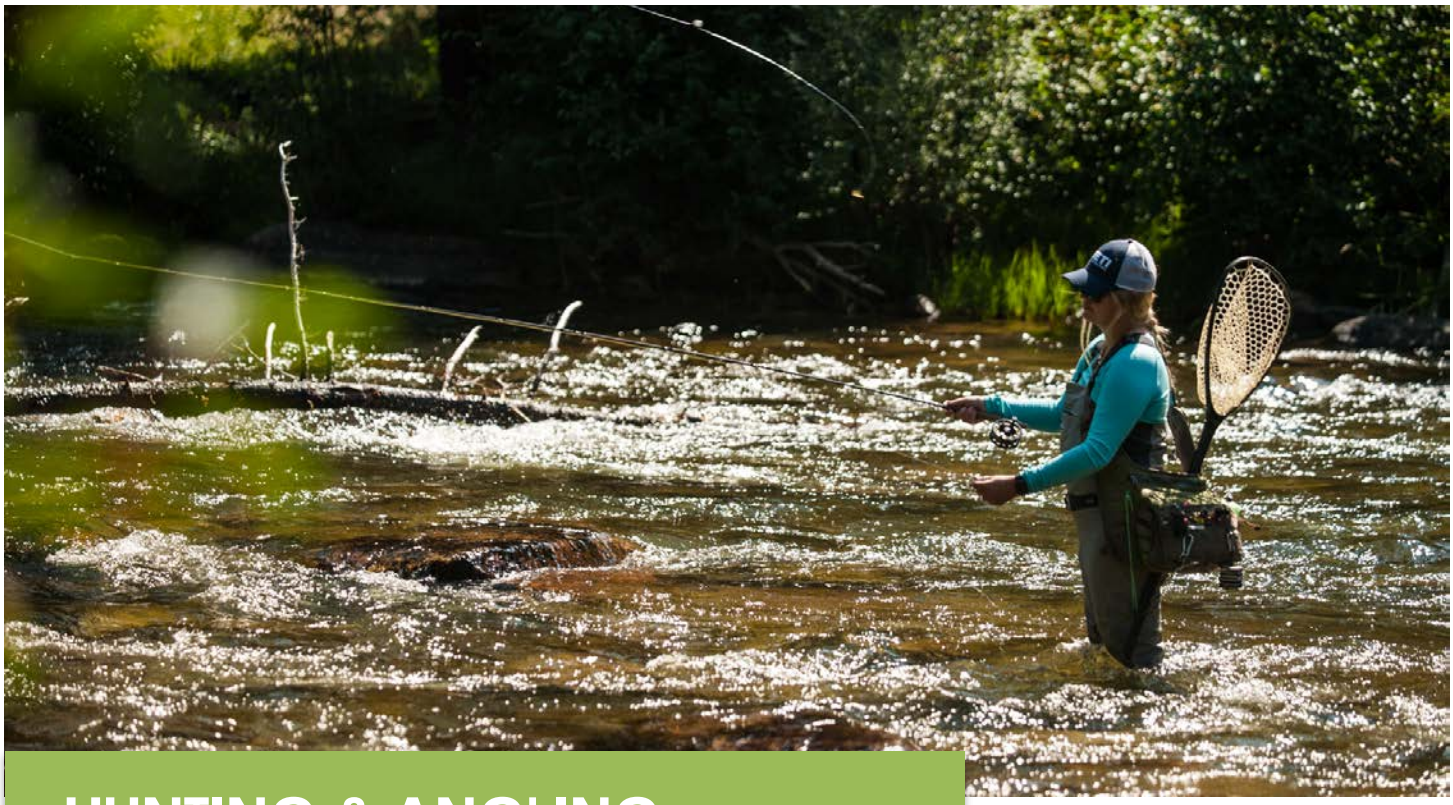

Photo: Petar Dopchev

HUNTING & ANGLING

Big-game thrives in Gunnison County with some of the most productive Game Management Units (GMUs) in the state.[21] Gunnison County has been called a sportsman's paradise, with extensive, intact backcountry habitat and gold-medal waters on the Taylor and Gunnison River.

The quantity and quality of wintering habitat is the primary limitation to productive and sustainable populations of mule deer, pronghorn and possibly elk. Mule deer and elk populations, especially, are currently below population levels which were much more abundant in the past 40 years. Various human pressures have caused ungulate populations and population size management objective to decline. The elk, mule deer and pronghorn herds are particularly impacted by natural winter die-offs such as those that occured in 1999, 2008, and 2017. Unfragmented and undisturbed winter habitats are key to ensuring that these populations can withstand the impacts of harsh winters. Increases in habitat fragmentation and human disturbances will make it even more difficult for ungulates to persist even in average winters. The GPLI has proposed protecting some of these lands, particularly as winter range in Gunnison County tends to be near roads and towns, making wildlife habitat more susceptible to additional fragmentation and human disturbance.

The cold, clean streams of Gunnison County are also home to numerous populations of native Colorado River cutthroat trout, including ten conservation populations. Keeping

[21] Colorado Parks and Wildlife. "Herd Management Plan". Available online: http://cpw.state.co.us/thingstodo/Pages/HerdManagementPlans.aspx

streams remote and free from development is critical to the future health of these trout.

Hunters and anglers provide significant economic contributions to Gunnison County. In 2014, fishing and hunting combined contributed $6.1 billion to the Colorado economy.[22]

GPLI members with a primary interest in hunting and angling desired these goals in the recommendations:

- Protect productive and intact public lands that support stream and terrestrial wildlife populations - both game and non-game species including Gunnison sage-grouse.
- Conserve quality habitat for all species in both winter and summer ranges.
- Promote quiet uses.
- Strengthen the local economy through angling and hunting uses and activities.
- Consider wildlife as an existing use of the land.

Local information on hunting and angling used by the GPLI:

- Habitat maps for elk, mule deer, bighorn sheep, and Colorado River cutthroat trout.
- Best available science on wildlife/recreation interactions.
- Information on proposed habitat improvement and restoration projects from the BLM, USFS, and CPW.

[22] Colorado Parks and Wildlife. '2016 Fact Sheet'. Available online: https://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/About/Reports/StatewideFactSheet.pdf

RANCHING

Ranching has a rich heritage in Gunnison County, with the first cattlemen arriving in the late 1800s shortly after the first miners. Some of those early ranching families still work the land in Gunnison County, with five generations or more having raised cattle here.

About two-thirds of Gunnison County's private land – 200,000 acres – is currently used for ranching operations.[23] The County is home to 244 ranches that in 2012 supported a market value $11 million in livestock sales and $1.7 million in crop sales.[24] Surrounding public lands provide additional grazing areas for cattle, helping to keep stockgrowing economically viable.

Many of Gunnison County's ranching families have chosen to permanently protect their private lands with conservation easements. In many cases, the GPLI's proposed protections for public lands are adjacent to these conserved lands – creating an opportunity to protect lands from the valley floors to the mountain tops in Gunnison County.

Ranchlands are crucial for food production, clean water, and wildlife habitat, and—less well known—some of them have become landscapes used for the scientific study of climate change. Sustainable ranching practices can provide significant ecological

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[23] Gunnison Valley Ranching. "Ranching Basics – statistics'. Available online: http://gunnisonvalleyranching.org/statistics.php

[24] U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agriculture Statistics Service. 'County Profile – Gunnison County, Colorado'. Available online: https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Colorado/cp08051.pdf

benefits, including groundwater recharge, watershed filtration, and carbon sequestration. The benefits help provide cleaner air and water for Gunnison County residents.[25] Through best management practices and holistic management, cattle can serve asbiological accelerators, kickstarting and keeping biological processes, such as the carbon cycle, in motion. This is important for taking excess carbon out of the atmosphere and storing it in the soil as a way to help mitigate climate change. With more carbon in soil, vegetation has better conditions to grow, which helps to keep water in the soil and insulate the land to be more drought resistant.[26]

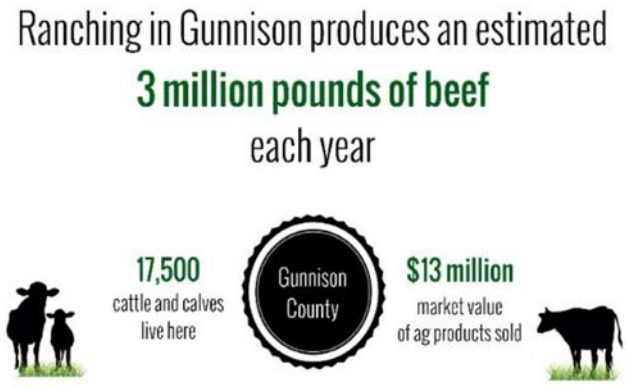

Figure 3: Statistics from Gunnison Valley Ranching.[22]

Ranching in Gunnison County helps to define the character and sense of place of the valley — sustaining Western traditions while attracting new residents and visitors who want to live and play in a mountain environment dominated by wide-open spaces.

GPLI members with a primary interest of ranching desired these goals in the recommendations:

- Respect and protect the ranches and the legacy of the industry.
- Ensure that areas can continue to be used for grazing and historical ranching activities.
- Relieve increasing pressure on ranching operations from climate change and increased recreational use.

Local information on ranching used by the GPLI:

- Location of ditches, stock ponds, and reservoirs from the Colorado Division of Natural Resources (DNR) Decision Support Systems.
- The GPLI plans to reach out to the Forest Service and individual ranchers to determine the location of fences or other grazing resources in proposed protected areas to ensure continued access.

[25] U.S Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative. 'Sustainable Grazing Lands: Providing a Healthy Environment'. Available online: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb1043496.pdf

[26] National Public Radio. "Cows Save the Planet: Soil Secrets for Saving the Earth'. June 17, 2003. Available at: http://www.npr.org/2013/06/17/191670717/cows-to-the-rescue-soils-secrets-for-saving-the-earth

ECOSYSTEM INTEGRITY

Gunnison County is home to a wide variety of ecosystems – communities of animals and plants that work together. In our county, you can find rolling seas of sagebrush, the second largest aspen forest in the world, rich forests of spruce and fir trees, and alpine tundra. Continuing to protect the integrity of Colorado's natural landscape is critical to maintain healthy habitats that can support sustainable wildlife populations and ecosystems.

Wildlife need large tracts of habitat to forage for food, disperse their young, and find mates to breed. Large areas of habitat that are connected across the landscape are much more likely to sustain healthy plant and animal populations than small habitat areas, or habitats that are isolated.[27]

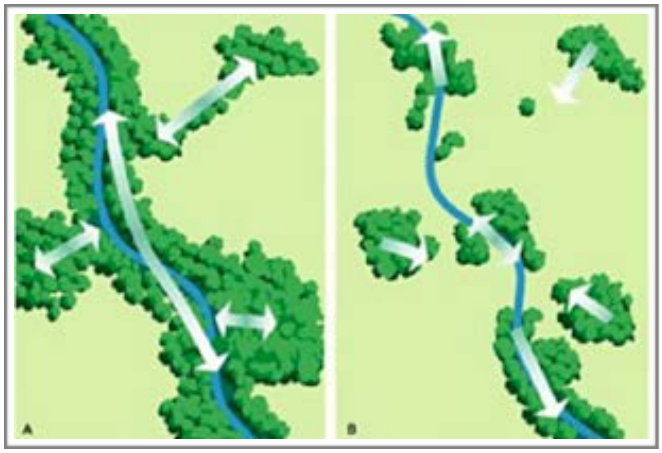

Figure 4: More connectivity means fewer barriers to dispersal or migration Unfragmented and undisturbed habitats are key to ensuring that impacts to wildlife are minimized.

Gunnison County falls within the greater Southern Rockies Ecoregion, which stretches roughly 500 miles from southern Wyoming to Northern New Mexico, and extends 250 miles from east to west at its widest point. Local and surrounding public

[27] Saura, Santiago. "Connectivity as the Amount of Reachable Habitat: Conservation Priorities and the Roles of Habitat Patches in Landscape Networks". Learning Landscape Ecology. April 2017.

lands provide habitat for elk, mule deer, pronghorn, mountain lion, black bear, and numerous small game species. More elusive are the wolverine and lynx, but they are also found in this ecoregion.

Prioritizing discrete public lands in Gunnison County for no new road development, commercial timber projects or mineral extraction prevents habitat fragmentation and contributes to landscape-level ecosystem integrity. Habitat fragmentation isolates wildlife into increasingly smaller areas and smaller populations. On the other hand, interconnected landscapes of undeveloped habitat are critical to ensure healthy populations of wildlife. The GPLI wants to leave a legacy of protection for Gunnison County's natural resources and critical wildlife habitat.

Scientists have high confidence that in the coming two decades a warming climate will affect Gunnison County in numerous ways, including a longer growing season, increased fire frequency and intensity, decrease runoff, snowlines moving up in elevation, and an average annual temperature increase of 2-5 F° warmer.[28] Ecosystems that have formed over hundreds or thousands of years in specific geographic locations will either have to adapt to the new climate in place or move across the landscape as the climate changes.

Climate change adaptation practices, however, show that protecting large tracts of intact habitat across elevation gradients will help our ecosystems adapt to a warming world.[29] Plants and animals, already stressed by climate change, will have a lower likelihood of survival if barriers like roads or industrial development impede their movement across the landscape.[30]

Safeguarding a broad variety of habitats and ecosystems at differing levels of protection improves the likelihood that we will have the conservation measures in place for the ecosystems and species that need them the most. A robust portfolio of protected areas increases the chances that wildlife, plants, and communities can adapt and withstand a changing climate.

GPLI members with a primary interest in ecosystem integrity desired these goals in the recommendations:

- Utilize the best available science to guide decisions to preserve ecosystem health.
- Plan for climate change by incorporating concepts of ecosystem resiliency and precautionary land planning.

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[28] Southwest Climate Change Initiative. 'Gunnison Basin Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment for the Gunnison Climate Working Group'. Available online: http://wwa.colorado.edu/publications/reports/TNC-CNHP-WWA-UAF_GunnisonClimChangeVulnAssess_Report_2012.pdf

[29] Groves, et al. "Incorporating climate change into systematic conservation planning". 2011. Biodiversity Conservation. Available online: https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10531-012-0269-3

[30] Nunez,et al. "Connectivity Planning to Address Climate Change". 2013. Conservation Biology. Available Online: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cobi.12014/abstract

- Protect intact habitat and wildlife corridors.
- Balance recreation and other uses with the protection of intact ecosystems.

Local information on ecology used by the GPLI:

- Maps from The Wilderness Society showing the rate of climate change, wildness, and potential migration corridors in Gunnison County.
- Climate models and best adaptation practices from The Nature Conservancy.

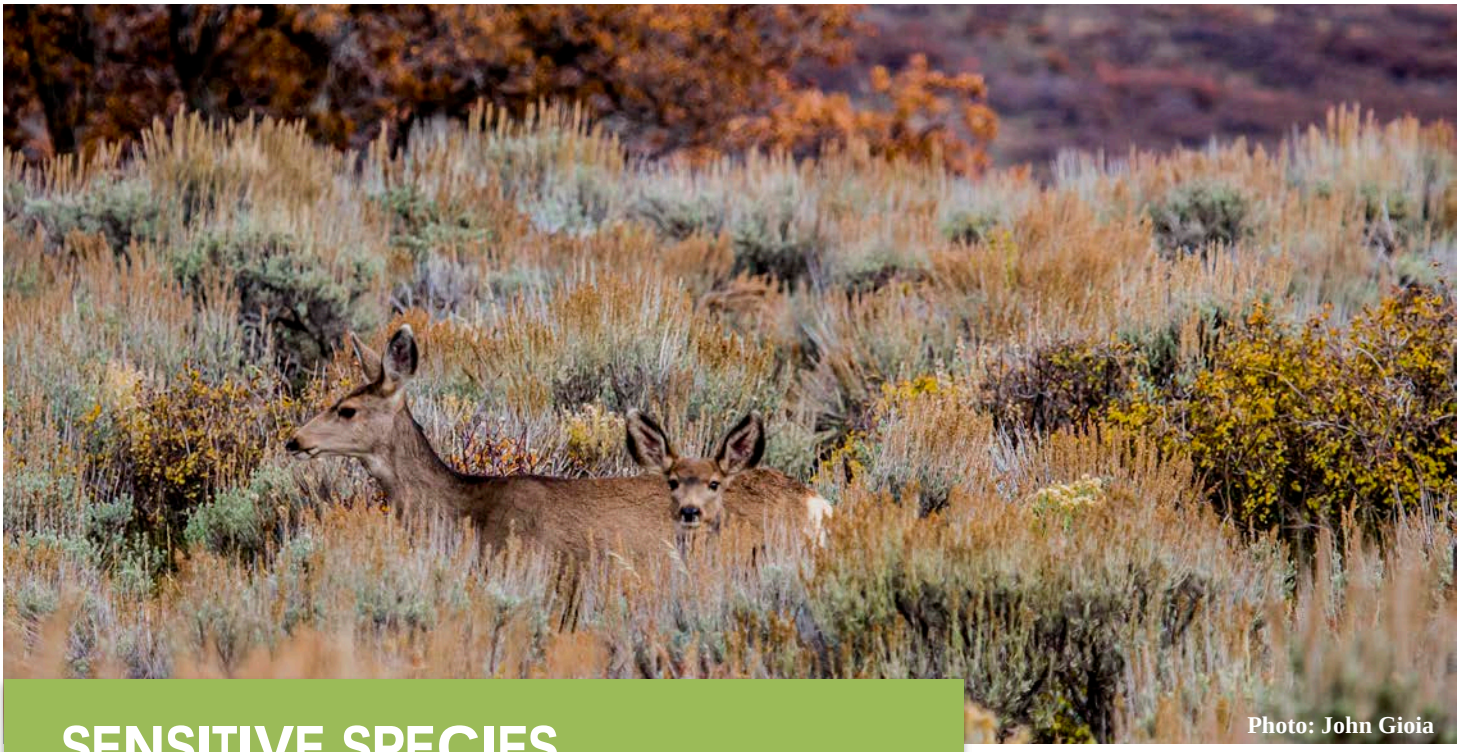

Photo: John Gioia

SENSITIVE SPECIES

Over two dozen globally and statewide threatened plant and animal species can be found in Gunnison County.[31] These species include the Colorado River cutthroat trout, Gunnison milkvetch, the willow carr, the boreal toad, and the Canada lynx. Gunnison County is also home to the Gunnison sage-grouse, which is listed as 'Threatened' under the Endangered Species Act. For species with small populations, the remaining individual plant and animals become increasingly important. Permanently protecting critical habitat for sensitive species is the best way to ensure their future longevity and the possibility that these species could someday rebound to their former vitality.

[31] Colorado State University Natural Heritage Program. "Documents and Reports". Available online: http://www.cnhp.colostate.edu/download/reports.aspx

Most of the protected lands in Gunnison County, like most of the protected lands in the United States, are located at high elevations. While high elevations often have breathtaking views, they are usually 'rock and ice' habitats with limited species' diversity. Broadening the elevation range of protected lands ensures that a greater number of species and their habitats are conserved. In Gunnison County, some of our most vulnerable species are found in the sagebrush ecosystem, an ecosystem that is very poorly protected nationally.[32] Big-game is also found at lower elevations, so protecting mid-elevation habits like sagebrush and aspen benefits not only our most threatened plants and animals, but also our outstanding hunting resources.

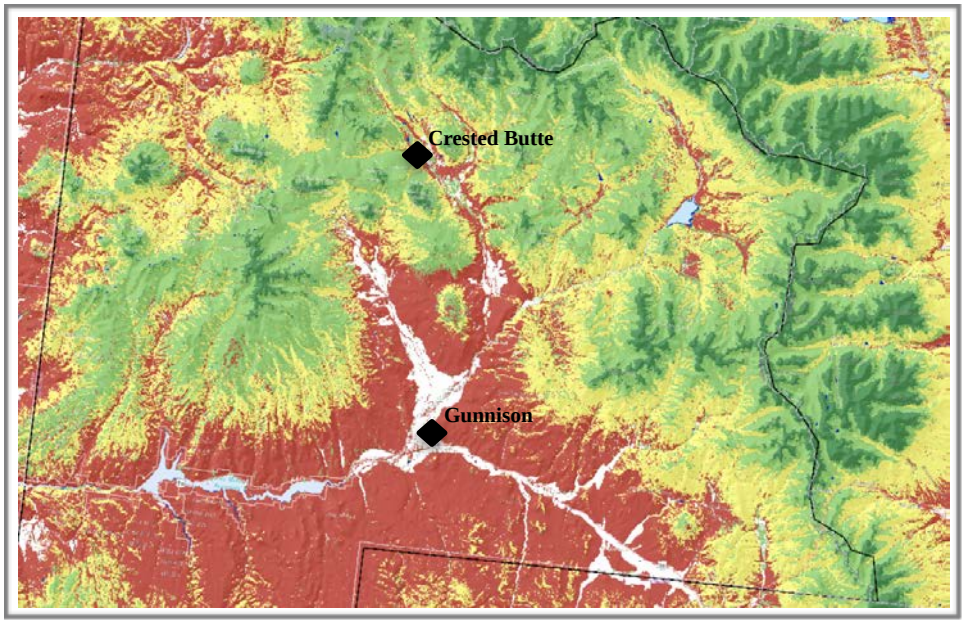

Figure 5: Image from 2015 study "The world's largest wilderness protection network after 50 years: An assessment of ecological system representation in the U.S. National Wilderness Preservation System". [28]

Areas in red are the least represented in the U.S. National Wilderness Preservation System. Areas in Green are the most represented in the United States' National Parks and Wilderness Areas. This image is a portion of the Gunnison Basin.

[32] Dietz, et al. "The world's largest wilderness protection network after 50 years: An assessment of ecological system representation in the U.S. National Wilderness Preservation System". 2015. Biological Conservation. Available online: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006320715000944

GPLI members with a primary interest in sensitive species desired these goals in the recommendations:

- Limit development in areas with sensitive species.
- Ensure that a broad range of ecosystems is protected.
- Provide permanent protection for the Gunnison sage-grouse.

Local information on sensitive species used by the GPLI:

- Sensitive species and Potential Conservation Areas (PCAs) from the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP).
- Candidate Conservation Agreement (CCA) for the Gunnison sage-grouse.

Summer Science Tour

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Gunnison County's public lands play a critical role in the advancement of science. Through the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory (RMBL), and in collaboration with Western Colorado University (WCU), local, state, and national agencies, Gunnison County hosts one of the largest gatherings of field biologists in the country. Every year, approximately 150 students and scientists visit from colleges and universities around the world visit Gunnison County to conduct field research and receive scientific training, most of which occurs on public lands.

A range of federal agencies, including the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, and the National Institutes of Health, collectively spend more than $10 million annually for research that depends at least in part on fieldwork on and around public lands in Gunnison County.

Collectively this research represents one of the nation's largest financial investments in field research conducted in a single region. Because of the infrastructure support for this research, and the value of past research to future research, the importance of Gunnison County to the nation's scientific portfolio is likely to increase.

In addition to serving as a platform for investigating biological, hydrological, and geological processes, this research informs our understanding of food security, water quality and quantity, human disease, and air quality. Examples of the impacts of this research include informing national policy (e.g., the revision of the Clean Air Act), providing insights into management of natural systems (e.g., national and international pollinator initiatives), sparking the creation of instream flow rights in the State of Colorado, and - as host to the largest collection of long-term studies - providing understanding of a changing world.

While this research is important at the national level, it directly benefits local communities. Scientists from WCU and RMBL are involved throughout the county in ensuring that decision-making is informed by the best available science. Scientists are actively involved in discovery and management of endangered species such as the Gunnison sage-grouse and the Uncompahgre fritillary butterfly, identification and management of critical and sensitive habitats, water management, and general planning. This research also provides opportunities for the public to engage with the scientists to better understand the role of public lands in natural processes.

The value of research in the Gunnison Basin depends upon a portfolio of ecosystem types and land access that range from sites that are owned/managed primarily for long-term security of research sites, to sites owned privately by individuals willing to provide access, to research sites on public lands. Research on public lands is managed within the context of multiple use, and depends on thoughtful land management that includes long-term protections for research sites and the landscapes on which they often depend. For these and many other reasons, access to and protection of public lands for scientific research should remain a critical part of public land management in Gunnison County.

All of the GPLI members were interested in ensuring access and protections for scientific research on public lands. The group desired these goals in the recommendations:

- Support our local scientific institutions.
- Protect access to and long-term protection of research sites.

WATER

Photo: John Fielder

The GPLI discussed how to best protect both water quality and quantity in its proposal.For water quantity, the GPLI ensured that all existing water rights structures, such as ditches, stock ponds, and reservoirs, would remain protected and available for use within proposed designations. The GPLI does not intend to impede the existing access of water right holders. By limiting development in certain areas, the GPLI also sought to lessen the potential for any future transmountain diversions from Gunnison County.

Water quality is closely correlated with land use. Intact natural landscapes filter water and slow runoff, cleaning water resources. Industrial activities, like road building, mining, or oil and gas development, can increase pollution, runoff speed, and sedimentation in streams and rivers.[33] Even small roads or trails can drastically change how water spreads across the landscape, and in turn, the health of a region's wetlands. A study from The Wilderness Society in 2012 shows that watersheds in wilderness are about 40% more likely to be highly functioning than watersheds found on other Forest Service lands.[34]

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[33] The Wilderness Society, 'Watershed Health in Wilderness, Roadless, and Roaded Areas of the National Forest System'. Available here: http://wilderness.org/sites/default/files/wilderness_newsroom_toolsfactsheets_forestsandpubliclands_AI_060512_factsheet1.pdf

[34] Ibid.

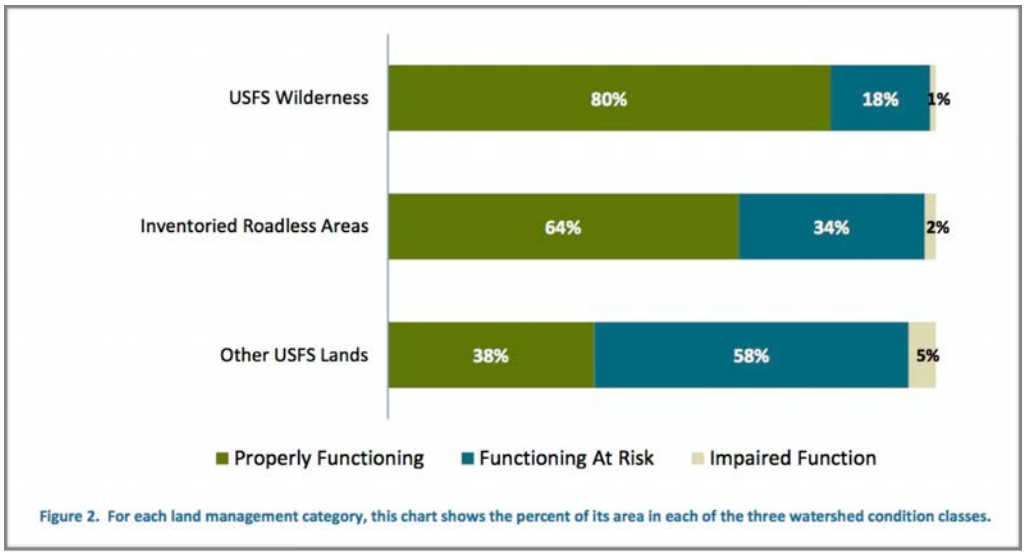

Figure 6: Data from The Wilderness Society white paper "Watershed Health in Wilderness, Roadless, and Roaded Areas of the National Forest System".[24]

Gunnison County residents and agricultural operations rely on clean water. A significant portion of the Coal Creek watershed, Crested Butte's source of drinking water, lies within the GPLI's proposal. Gunnison County's headwaters are also critical for downstream farms and ranches. The North Fork Valley, located immediately downstream in adjacent Delta County, is one of Colorado's largest producers of organic agriculture and the primary supplier of fresh produce for Gunnison and Crested Butte. For example, 75% of the produce sold at the Crested Butte Farmers Market is sourced from the North Fork Valley.

GPLI members with a primary interest of water desired these goals in the recommendations:

- Allow for valid existing rights.
- Consider and honor historic uses.
- Protect access to water and water infrastructure.
- Limit development in sensitive watersheds.

Local information on water resources used by the GPLI:

- Location of ditches, stock ponds, and reservoirs from the Colorado Division of Natural Resources (DNR) Decision Support Systems.
- Information on the Wet Meadows Restoration Project from the USFS, BLM, and Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District.

ECONOMY

Photo: John Mullins

A growing body of research shows that protected public lands are good for the economy. Protected public lands provide a high-quality of life through recreation amenities, scenic vistas, and clean air and water. This quality of life attracts more qualified employees, brings entrepreneurs to the region, and sustains a higher rate of job growth.

In 2011, the Sonoran Institute reported that tourism generates more than $10.9 billion annually for Colorado's economy and supports more than 140,000 jobs. More than 65% of tourists come to Colorado primarily for activities that involve the natural environment.[35]

Headwaters Economics, a non-partisan research group, found that counties with more protected public lands had higher per-capita incomes and job growth than counties without protected public lands. [36]

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[35] Sonoran Institute. 'Fact Sheet: Economic Impacts of Land Conservation in Colorado'. Available online: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/53973ed8e4b0ac2dcfe3932c/t/5436d09de4b069a3cabb5132/1412878493795/Sonoran+Institute+2011.pdf

[36] Headwaters Economics. 'West is Best – How Public Lands in the West Create and Competitive Economic Advantage'. Available online: http://headwaterseconomics.org/wp-content/uploads/West_Is_Best_Full_Report.pdf

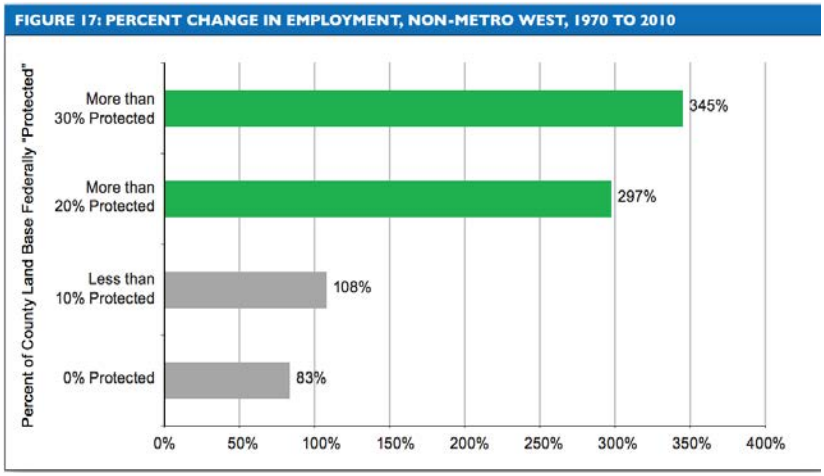


Figure 7: Data from Headwaters Economics "West is Best – How Public Lands in the West Create and Competitive Economic Advantage".[33]

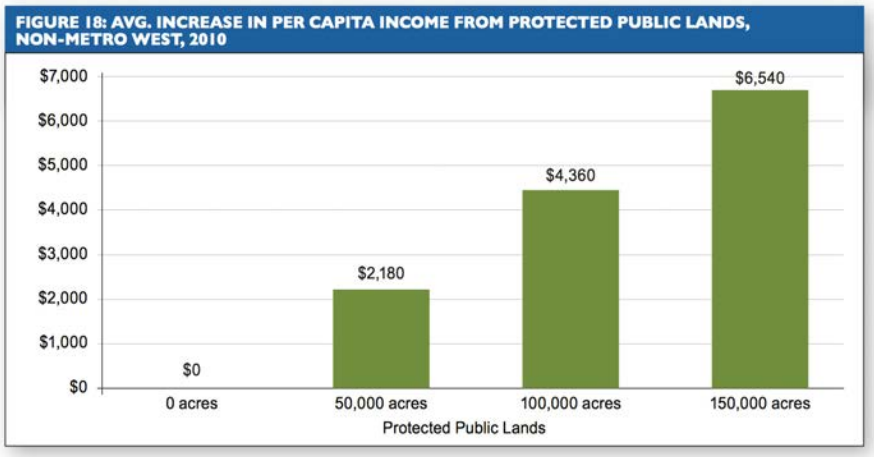
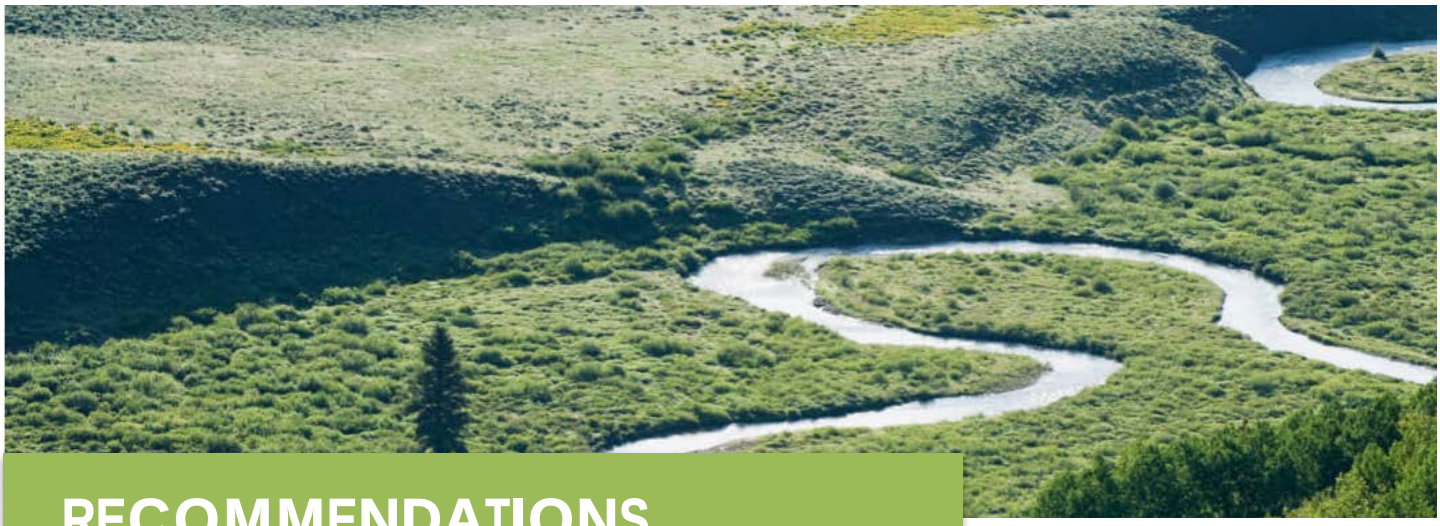


Figure 8: Data from Headwaters Economics "West is Best – How Public Lands in the West Create and Competitive Economic Advantage".[33]

All of the GPLI members were interested in ensuring that Gunnison County's economy remained vibrant for future generations. The group desired these goals in the recommendations:

- Support a thriving business culture.
- Protect the natural resources and amenities that draw high-quality businesses and workers to our county.
- Ensure the long-term sustainability of Gunnison County's outdoor recreation economy.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Photo: John Mullins

In June 2017, the GPLI made initial recommendations for protecting key public lands in and around Gunnison County. Those recommendations reflected eighteen months of work learning about Gunnison County's public lands and community interests, discussing potential options for their permanent protection, achieving hard-won compromises, and crafting agreements among the coalition members.

The goal of the GPLI was to work together to create a true community proposal that reflects a range of community values including mountain biking, motorized recreation, ranching, conservation, science, water resources, and hunting and angling. The recommendations are a community proposal that builds upon the common ground between all of the members and provides a carefully vetted, deliberative vision for what subsequent legislation could look like for public lands in and around Gunnison County.

Since June 2017, the GPLI has been conducting extensive public outreach to gather feedback and refine the initial proposal to accurately reflect on-the-ground conditions, suitable designations, and appropriate boundaries.

Key stakeholder groups and community members in and around Gunnison County have voiced support for the GPLI's initial consensus proposal. At the same time, members of the community have raised some specific concerns with particular parts of the initial proposal. As a result of that feedback, the GPLI has worked to refine the initial recommendations, including by adjusting boundaries or in some circumstances changing land designation recommendations. Please see page 107 for more details.

The GPLI remains actively engaged in outreach and consultation with regional communities on a number of areas categorized in this report as 'Areas in Discussion'. The GPLI initially identified these areas for potential protection, but it desires more in-depth conversations to fully understand on-the-ground conditions, appropriate boundaries and suitable designations. The GPLI will continue to have conversations regarding these areas and ideas. The GPLI has no intention of including any areas in its final proposal that are not based on public participation and thorough analysis.

For the Areas of Agreement, this proposal:

- Does not close any roads or trails that are currently open; existing trail uses would remain essentially the same.
- Allows future trail projects to be considered for construction and management through standard agency decision making by the BLM and Forest Service.
- Does not affect popular over the snow riding areas.
- Balances interests in motorized, mechanized, and quiet recreational uses.
- Ensures that current ranching operations and water use can continue.
- Protects critical habitat for species such as mule deer and elk, while providing flexibility for habitat restoration projects for species such as bighorn sheep and Gunnison sage-grouse.

Recommendation Format Guide

The structure for each recommended designation area in the report is:

Recommended designation type

There are two designation categories:

(1) Wilderness - All recommended wilderness areas would follow the standards and guidelines of the Wilderness Act of 1964.

- The GPLI recommends that applicable legislative provisions be modeled after other wilderness areas in Colorado. The Hermosa Creek Wilderness and Dominguez Canyon Wilderness legislation provide two of the most recent examples. These bills include special provisions for the management of wildfire, insects, and disease, protection of grazing interests and water rights, and jurisdiction over wildlife.

(2) Special management area - Each SMA that has been agreed to will have a number of common elements and special provisions; some may also have particular elements and provisions that are unique

COMMON ELEMENTS:

The GPLI proposal recommends that every SMA that has been agreed to would allow agencies to continue to manage grazing and special use permits (such as outfitter and guide permits). The agencies would also retain broad authority to manage wildfire, insects, diseases, and habitat restoration, for example. No existing roads or trails in SMAs would be closed by the legislation. Every SMA also would include a mineral withdrawal limiting future mining activity to maintain the special ecological, environmental, water, air, scientific, scenic, historical, or other special values in the area. In all cases, valid existing rights would be protected, including valid water rights, private property rights, and mineral rights. More specifically, the following common elements would be included in each of the special management areas:

- *DESIGNATION*: Each SMA would be specifically designated, including its location, size, and designated name. Designated names can include, for example, Special Management Area, Recreation Management Area, or Wildlife Conservation Area. Designations only apply to federal lands administered by the Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

- *STATEMENT OF PURPOSES:* The purposes of the SMAs may differ to some extent, but each SMA will be guided by a statement of purposes that includes

reference to a range of values, such as to conserve, protect, and enhance for the benefit of present and future generations the recreational, wildlife, watershed, scenic, and ecological resources of the area.

- *DIRECTION OF MANAGEMENT AND USES:* Legislation will direct the Forest Service or BLM, as appropriate, to manage each SMA in a manner that conserves, protects, and enhances the purposes for which it is designated (see above) and in accordance with applicable laws. It also will include direction on specific uses that will be restricted or allowed. The description of "Special Provisions" below provides more specific information on direction on management and uses.

- *PROTECTION OF EXISTING RIGHTS:* All designations, withdrawals and management direction will be subject to valid existing rights, such as water rights, landownership and lease rights, and treaty rights.

- *WITHDRAWAL*: To ensure that the special purposes of the SMAs can be achieved, each SMA will include a withdrawal, subject to valid existing rights, from all forms of entry, appropriation, and disposal under the public land laws; location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and operation of the mineral leasing, mineral materials, and geothermal leasing laws.

- *NO NEW ROADS:* To ensure that the special purposes of the SMAs can be achieved, each SMA will include a provision generally prohibiting the construction of new roads. Ultimately, the legislation may include an exception for the construction of temporary roads for certain purposes in some of the SMAs, such as for ecological restoration projects, so long as the temporary roads are promptly and fully decommissioned, for example.

- *WILDFIRE, INSECTS, and DISEASE:* The legislation will provide that the agencies may take any measure within the SMAs, in accordance with applicable laws, that the agencies determine is necessary to control fire, insects, and diseases.

- *INCORPORATION OF ACQUIRED PROPERTY:* If, for example, a non-federal landowner chooses to sell, exchange or donate land or an interest in land within the boundaries of an SMA to the BLM or Forest Service, then that land will become part of the SMA upon federal acquisition.

- *VEGETATION MANAGEMENT:* In general, projects undertaken for the purpose of harvesting commercial timber are not allowed in SMAs, but the restriction would not prevent the agencies from harvesting or selling merchantable products that are byproducts of allowable vegetation management activities, such as vegetation management conducted as part of ecological restoration projects that further the purposes of the SMA.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS:

In addition to the common elements above, the SMAs also may have special provisions emphasizing or providing for specific values, land management actions, or uses. In some cases, for example, wildlife conservation, science, or recreation would be established as a primary purpose of an SMA. Certain uses may be restricted within the proposed SMAs to ensure that the purposes are achieved, sometimes along with necessary exceptions. Where such special provisions were specifically discussed and agreed to, they are noted in the area summaries that follow. The following summaries provide a more detailed explanation of the short-hand references included under each proposal area summary under the heading "An SMA with the following stipulation(s)":

- *MOTORIZED AND/OR MECHANIZED VEHICLE NOT ALLOWED:* In some SMAs, stipulations will be included providing that cars, off-highway vehicles, and all other motorized vehicles generally will be prohibited ("Motorized vehicles not allowed"), In other cases, motor vehicles are permitted for summer recreation, but over-snow motor vehicle use generally is prohibited ("Over-snow motor vehicle use not allowed"), or over-snow vehicle use is permitted, but not summer motorized vehicle use ("Summer motorized vehicle use not allowed"). Similarly, mechanized use—such as mountain bikes—may be generally prohibited along with motorized vehicle use ("Motorized and mechanized vehicle use not allowed").

  In any such cases, a special exception for emergency, administrative, or mobility-impaired uses may be included, as necessary. As with all uses, the inclusion of a restriction or an exception for motorized or mechanized vehicles or uses does not affect the land management agencies' authority to further manage or restrict such uses through travel management planning processes or other applicable laws and regulations.

- *NO NEW MOTORIZED OR MECHANIZED VEHICLE USES BEYOND THOSE AT TIME OF ENACTMENT:* Some SMAs include a special stipulation generally prohibiting the expansion of motorized and mechanized vehicle use beyond those roads and trails that currently are open to such uses under governing agency plans ("No new motorized or mechanized vehicle uses beyond that existing at the time of enactment").

  Some also have a similar stipulation, but with a special additional provision known as a "savings clause" providing that a specific proposed trail or use would not be affected by the SMA designation ("No new motorized or mechanized vehicle uses beyond those existing at the time of enactment, with a savings provision…."). Such, provisions would ensure that any consideration of the activity or proposal by the land management agencies at a future date would not be positively or negatively influenced by the designation.

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

This section is a written record of information gathered at GPLI meetings. GPLI meetings discussed existing public land uses and desired future conditions.

- Information reviewed included topography, roads, water structures, existing and proposed trails, grazing operations, scientific research sites, restoration projects, and the location of wildlife, sensitive species, biological diversity rankings from Colorado Natural Heritage Program, and ecological systems (such as watersheds).

Rationale:

This section summarizes the compromises, values, and reasoning for how a recommendation was decided.

Next Steps:

For some of the areas of agreement, the GPLI continues to consider one or more aspects of the proposal outlined in this section of the summary. Where there are no needs outlined, the recommendation is ready for the next phase of drafting legislation.

Maps

As described above, the GPLI has recommended a number of changes to its initial proposal in response to the community engagement that followed the release of its proposal in June 2017. You can find the changes to individual recommendations in the following pages or a summary list on page 107.

The GPLI continues to meet regularly and is working through a few remaining modifications based on community and stakeholder input. These include areas previously noted in the initial report as 'Considered for SMA and/or Wilderness, To Be Vetted with Regional Communities'. The GPLI has been engaging with these regional communities and stakeholders to hear ideas and concerns. These are now identified in the report as 'Areas in Discussion'.

The GPLI will continue to have conversations regarding these areas and ideas. The GPLI has no intention of including any areas in its final proposal that are not based on public participation and appropriate analysis. The process for refining the remaining 'Areas in Discussion' is continuing.

Some of the areas originally identified in the initial report categorized as 'Considered for SMA and/or Wilderness, To Be Vetted with Regional Communities' are no longer included in the GPLI recommendations. These areas can be found listed on page 104. At the same time, the GPLI is proud to recommend 452,221 acres of public lands for protection in and around the Gunnison Basin, and looks forward to seeing these recommendations drafted into federal legislation. This community proposal reflects input received since the launch of recommendations in June 2017 and the common ground among all of the coalition members. The GPLI intends for this proposal to serve as the basis for federal legislation.

The GPLI has developed maps to accompany this report. Maps can be found at the links below. Some of the recommendation area boundaries have been looked at and revised in great detail, but the process of find-tuning recommended area boundaries will continue.

A map with explanation of the January 2019 revised proposal can be found online here or at:

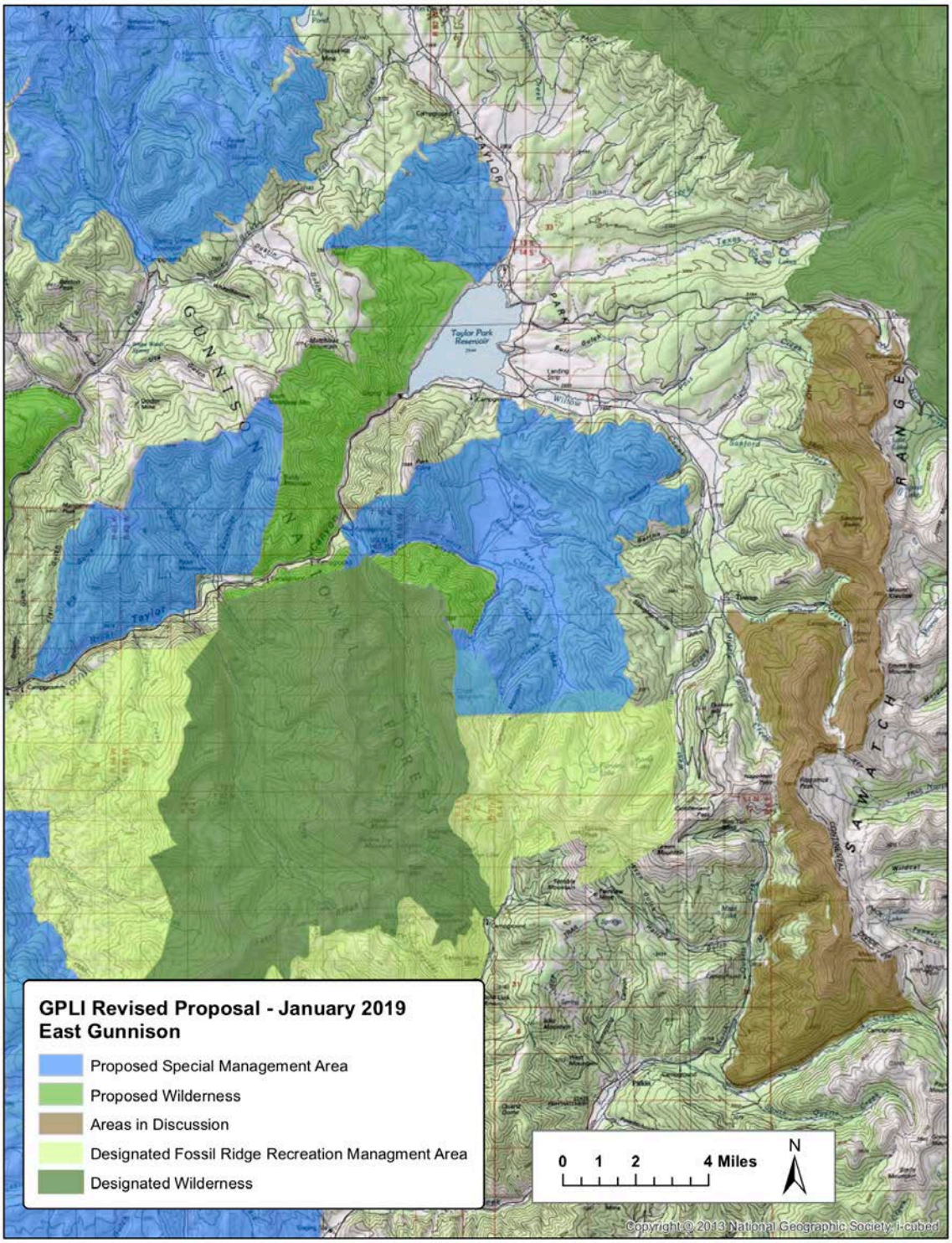
https://wilderness.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=95a62ce5aa5e4e57a25145464a4ea7d2

A map of the January 2019 revised proposal can be found here or online at:

https://wilderness.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ca44b387fa4a4b6392e02735e95c8a37

Areas of Agreement

Eastern Gunnison



CRYSTAL CREEK WILDERNESS ADDITION

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Area is adjacent to the current Fossil Ridge Wilderness, Fossil Ridge Recreation Management Area and Taylor River Road.
- Overlaps with designated Colorado Roadless Area.
- Steep topography and limited recreation infrastructure.
- Western area includes elk migration corridors and summer range.

Rationale for Recommendation

A wilderness addition will protect the natural and undeveloped character of these federal lands, as well as provide protection for Colorado River cutthroat trout in nearby streams. The addition will expand landscape-scale connectivity with the existing Fossil Ridge Wilderness, Fossil Ridge Recreation Management Area, and the proposed Union Park SMA.

LOTTIS CREEK WILDERNESS ADDITION

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Area adjoins the existing Fossil Ridge Wilderness near the Fossil Ridge Recreation Management Area and Taylor River Road.
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area.
- Limited recreation infrastructure.

Rationale for Recommendation

A wilderness addition would help safeguard the area from development and help preserve the area's naturalness, providing landscape connectivity to the existing Fossil Ridge Wilderness, Fossil Ridge Recreation Management Area, and the proposed Union Park SMA.

UNION PARK SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- No new motorized or mechanized vehicle uses, beyond those existing at the time of enactment.
- See also common elements on page 44.

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Moderate Biodiversity Significance (B4)
- Elk calving, migration, and summer concentration area
- Wildlife habitat for lynx, bighorn sheep, and moose
- Heavy recreational use in the area, including summer and winter motorized recreation
- Area is adjacent to the current Fossil Ridge Wilderness, Fossil Ridge Recreation Management Area

Recommendation Rationale

This is a unique area, central to the character of the Gunnison Valley. The GPLI felt this area should be safeguarded from development.

The SMA designation seeks to balance wildlife values with existing summer and winter motorized recreation. The designation will serve as a backstop against habitat fragmentation and water quality degradation by prohibiting new roads and trails. The SMA will allow recreational uses on existing routes to continue. The GPLI feels that this area should be preserved for recreation and wildlife, and therefore is inappropriate for new mining, oil and gas, or commercial timber harvest.

This area abuts the existing Fossil Ridge Recreation Management Area (RMA). The GPLI will continue to work to determine whether these areas should be joined or appropriate as two distinct areas.

In the past, this area was discussed as a potential site of a transmountain water diversion. The GPLI feels strongly that this area should not be used for a transmountain water diversion.

MATCHLESS WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA AND WILDERNESS

Proposed Designations

1. Wilderness area between Bald Mountain and Rocky Point to the Taylor Reservoir
2. An SMA to the north and south of the wilderness area with the following stipulations:
   - Motorized and mechanized vehicle use not allowed.
   - Primary purposes include protection of naturalness and undeveloped character.
   - See also common elements on page 44.

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Winter motorized use occurs on the northwest side of the proposal area (Spring Creek Road to the ridgeline between Matchless and Baldy Mountains) and potential use in the meadows along the northwest side of Taylor Reservoir
- Habitat restoration work for bighorn sheep, including mechanical treatment and prescribed burns may be an important part of managing the SMA
- Overlaps with designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Preservation of the area's wilderness character, particularly with increased motorized use in Taylor Park
- The area has very high biodiversity significance (B2) and big game habitat.
- Ensure wilderness and SMA boundaries align with Bureau of Reclamation operational boundaries for Taylor Park Reservoir and dam

Recommendation rationale

The recommendation seeks to strike a balance between the need for habitat protection and restoration, recreational use, and the desire to protect the area's wilderness

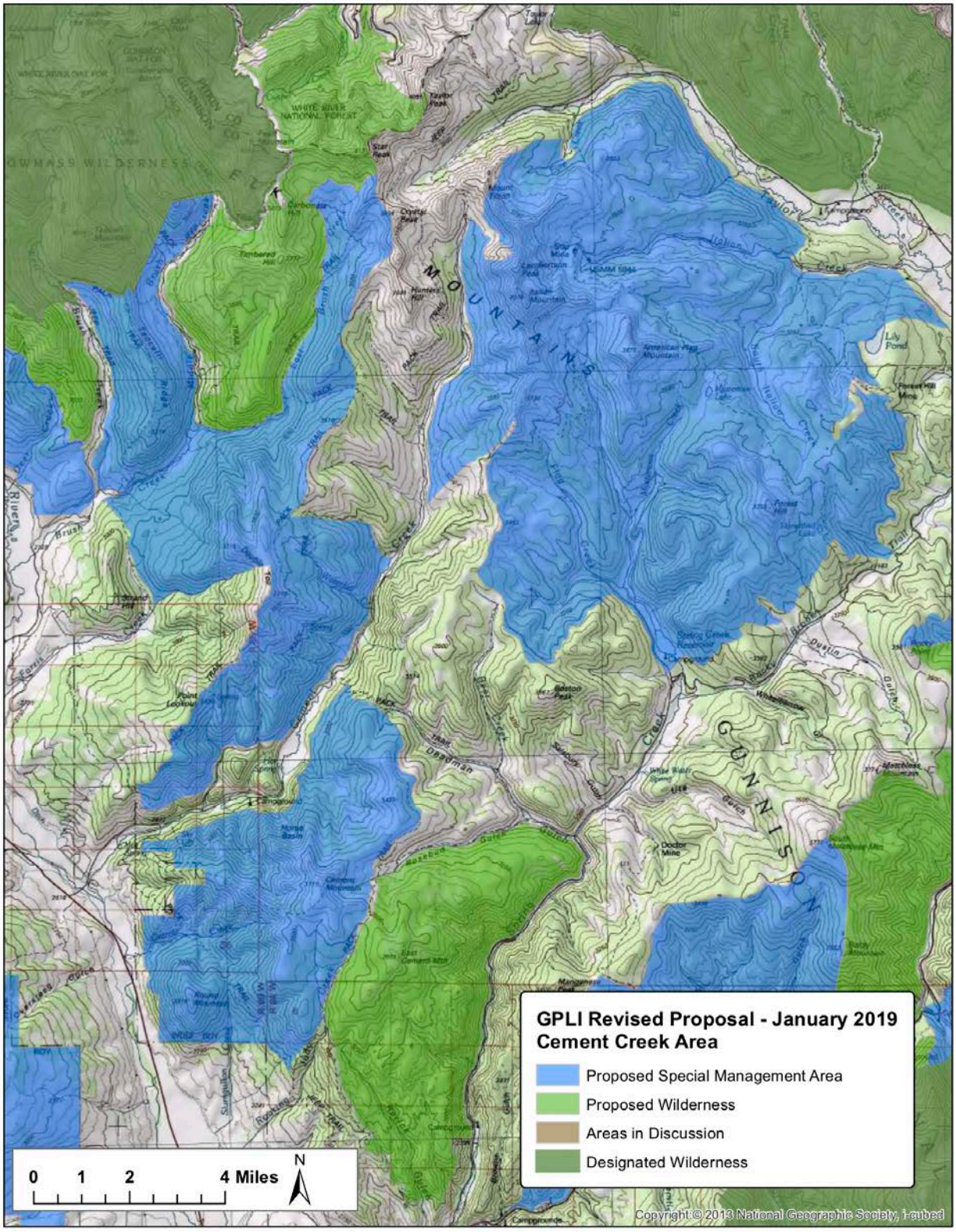
character. By moving the northwestern boundary of both of the designations to the ridgeline, existing winter motorized recreational opportunities from the Spring Creek area should be unaffected by either designation. Motorized and mechanized use along the Doctor's Park/Gunnison Spur of the Colorado Trail will also be unaffected.

The SMA designations will ensure that bighorn sheep habitat restoration in the area can continue unimpeded, while maintaining the remote and undeveloped nature of this sensitive habitat.

The wilderness is located in a rugged, steep area where habitat restoration would be difficult. The GPLI checked with the Forest Service and it does not currently have habitat restoration plans in the proposed wilderness area. The wilderness area would protect an area of very high biodiversity concern (rare plant species) and maintain the area's remote character.

Boundaries were cross checked with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) Taylor Park Boundary and Ownership map to ensure the area around the Taylor dam and reservoir that are under BOR's jurisdiction are not within a wilderness designation. Wildfire protection and response were also considered in designing the boundaries.

Cement Creek Area



EAST CEMENT WILDERNESS

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Big game habitat and high biodiversity significance (B3)
- Wilderness character
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Winter motorized use on moderate slopes
- Ability to reroute the Cement Mountain Trail if necessary

Rationale for Recommendation

A new wilderness area would provide protection for big game, an area of high biodiversity along Spring Creek, and maintain the remote, undeveloped, and wild character of a landscape with important quiet recreational use.

Some winter-motorized may exist on the moderate slopes in the northern part of the proposal area. However, both the Rosebud and Cement Mountain Trails are closed to all motorized use from 10/1 to 6/30, making any potential for such use either difficult or contrary to current Forest Service travel management restrictions.

GRANITE BASIN PROTECTION AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- Motorized vehicles not allowed.
- No new mechanized vehicle uses, beyond those existing at the time of enactment, with a savings provision that would allow for the potential development of the Eccher exit trail for mountain bikes at Highway 135.
- Emphasis on protection of naturalness and undeveloped character as primary purposes.
- See also common elements on page 44.

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Big game habitat and very high biodiversity significance (B2)
- Wilderness character
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Areas with winter motorized use on moderate slopes were excluded from proposed designation.
- Ability to reroute the Eccher Gulch and Cement Mountain Trails.

Rationale for Recommendation

Some winter-motorized use likely exists on the moderate slopes in the southern part of the proposal area, and that area was excluded. However, both the Rosebud and Cement Mountain Trails are closed to all motorized use from 10/1 to 6/30, limiting any broader potential for such use. Consistent with trail closures, the area will be closed to winter motorized use.

The SMA would allow for continued use of the Eccher Gulch trail as well as potential realignments and improvements.

An SMA designation in this area would protect an area of high biodiversity in the Cement Creek Valley and big game habitat.

Next steps

The GPLI needs to consult with the land management agencies and other stakeholders to consider whether transferring administrative jurisdiction of the two small parcels of isolated BLM land on the west end of the SMA to the Forest Service to be managed as part of the SMA would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of land management.

DOUBLE TOP RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- Over-snow motorized vehicle use not allowed (with an exception that includes motorized use for emergency response during the Grand Traverse)
- Emphasis on recreation and conservation and primary purposes
- See also common elements on page 44

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Winter motorized use coming west from Cement Creek road starting north of the Deadman's parking lot
- Critical winter habitat for big game and areas of very high (B2) and high (B3) biodiversity significance
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Desire for the area around the Friends Hut to remain a quiet use area
- Overlap with course of the Grand Traverse Triple Crown

Recommendation rationale

The SMA will protect important winter habitat in the southeast part of the landscape, as well as calving near Timbered Hill. It will also protect zones of very high and high biodiversity significance and keep the area closest to the Friend's Hut as a quiet area.

The slopes in the northern Cement Creek drainage see significant winter motorized use. The SMA boundaries have been adjusted in response to some existing winter motorized use in the area. This includes from the Cement Creek Valley floor to the top of the ridge between Star Peak, Crystal Peak, and Double Top – starting at Waterfall Creek.

Though community outreach, the GPLI also learned that the slopes south of Double Top and west of Point Lookout see small amounts of winter motorized use. In response, the GPLI adjusted the original SMA boundaries to exclude the area east of Strand Hill along the Farris Creek to Double Top and from there along the ridge to Point Lookout, and to the private property north of the residential area in Crested Butte South.

The GPLI has worked with the Crested Butte Nordic Center to adjust the western boundary to pull back the area northwest of Trail 409 and south of County Road 738 to ensure the continued ability to set up a safety checkpoint with motorized support at Death Pass for the winter leg of the Grand Traverse Triple Crown Race. The designation will not preclude winter-motorized use for the safety support of the Grand Traverse.

The SMA would allow for motorized and mechanized use to continue in the area during

the summer, along with potential realignments and improvements to existing trails.

The boundaries and stipulations of this SMA are designed to best meet the interests of summer recreational users, winter motorized users, quiet users in the upper East Brush Creek basin, and sensitive winter and calving habitat.

Next steps

The group needs to decide whether new trail building will be allowed in this area or if use will be confined to existing trails.

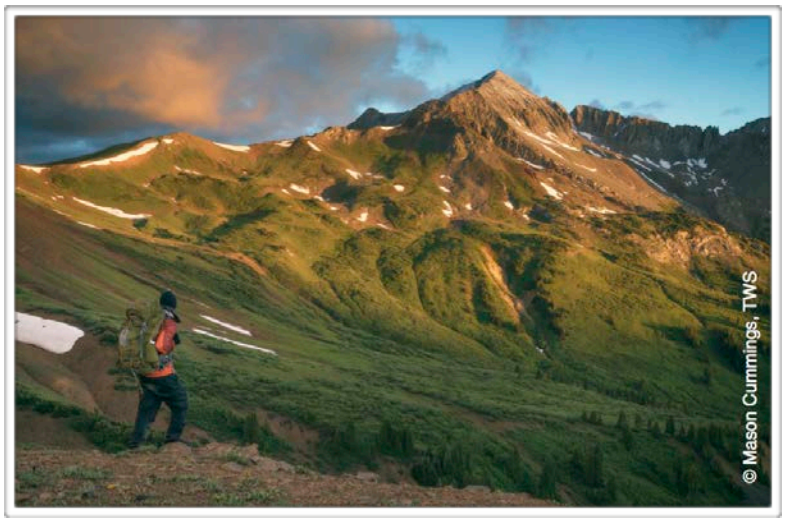
STAR PEAK WILDERNESS

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Wilderness character, with outstanding opportunities for unconfined recreation including backcountry hunting in the summer and backcountry skiing in the winter and naturally appearing vegetation and wildlife communities
- Potential to serve as a wildlife refuge in a landscape with increasing recreational use
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Quiet use and maintenance of the Friend's and Linley Hut experience
- Adjacent to the Grand Traverse Triple Crown

Recommendation Rationale

A standalone wilderness in this area will protect its character, serve as a wildlife refuge, and maintain quiet use near the Friend's Hut. The GPLI has also consulted with the Braun Huts and their desire to maintain quiet use around the Linley Hut.



Pulling back the wilderness boundary to Star Pass, along the ridge between Star Peak and Crystal Peak, will ensure that highly-valued winter motorized recreation remains open.

The GPLI has worked with the Crested Butte Nordic Center to pull back the boundary in the basin west of Carbonate Hill, south of Star Peak, and east of Crystal Peak. Specifically, the wilderness boundary would follow the top western branch of East Brush Creek to and along the vegetation line until it reaches the ridge between Crystal and Star Peak.

The Friends Hut, because it is not 50 years old, likely would not qualify as a 'historical' structure under the Wilderness Act. The Friends Hut and the area directly adjacent to the hut have been removed from the wilderness boundary.

AMERICAN FLAG SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- No new motorized or mechanized vehicle uses, beyond those existing at the time of enactment with a savings provision that would allow for the potential development of the Big Grassy trail (less than 50" wide) for mechanized and motorized recreation
- Emphasis on recreation and conservation and primary purposes
- See also common elements on page 44

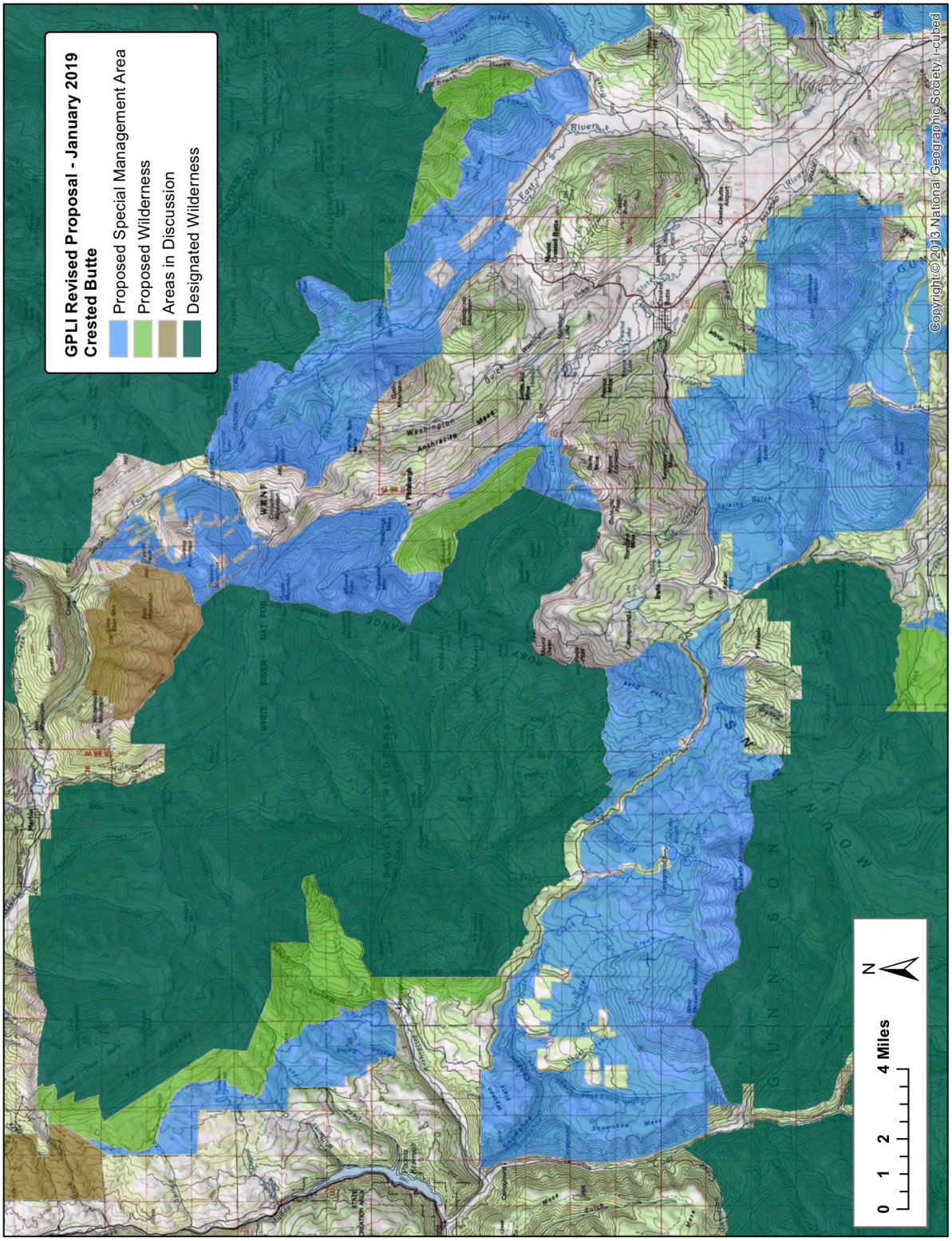
Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Two areas of moderate biodiversity significance (B4) — one area of general biodiversity significance (B5)
- Elk and mule deer migration routes
- Colorado River cutthroat trout populations in Cement Creek, North Fork Italian Creek, and Upper Spring Creek
- Sensitive bird species in the area
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Heavy recreational use in the area
- Winter motorized use
- Summer motorized use on existing roads and trails in the area
- Star Peak Trail is highly valued by motorized users and in need of significant maintenance

Recommendation Rationale

This area is home to several sensitive species, including populations of Colorado River cutthroat trout. It is also home to a well-known motorized trail (the Star Peak Trail). To protect these species while allowing for continued recreational use, the GPLI has proposed an SMA that will generally prohibit new trails and roads, with the exception for the potential construction of the Big Grassy trail through a savings provision. The SMA will allow existing summer and winter motorized and mechanized use, including potential realignments and improvements to existing trails.

Crested Butte



DEER CREEK PROTECTION AREA AND WILDERNESS ADDITION

Proposed Designations:

1. Wilderness addition to the existing Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness extending to a portion of the Deer Creek Trail.
2. An SMA from the Deer Creek Trail to the private property to the south, and Perry Creek to the north, with the following stipulations:
    - Summer motorized vehicle use not allowed
    - No new mechanized vehicle uses, beyond those existing at the time of enactment, with a savings provision that would allow for the potential development of the Deer Creek connector trail to Brush Creek for mechanized use
    - Primary purposes include protection of naturalness and undeveloped character
    - See also common elements on page 44

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Areas of Very High (B2) and High (B3) Biodiversity Significance
- Winter range, production areas, and migration routes for elk
- Colorado River cutthroat trout in West Brush Creek
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Close proximity to ranching operations, infrastructure, and water structures
- Scientific research values, including historic and ongoing research sites.

Rationale for Recommendation

The Deer Creek area was proposed for a combination of wilderness and special management protection due to its wildlife, scientific, wildland, and recreational opportunities.

The SMA is adjacent to the recently established conservation easement at the Trampe Ranch along the iconic valley bottom of the East River Valley. By using both a wilderness addition and a protective SMA, the GPLI will be able to protect the public land from the valley floor to the top of some of the region's iconic 14,000 ft. mountains. Protecting lands across elevation gradients is an important strategy for climate change adaptation.

The SMA designation will allow the Deer Creek Trail to remain open to mountain biking with the boundary designed to permit sustainable trail reroutes. Originally, the GPLI recommended the SMA be closed to winter motorized, but during community outreach, it became apparent the area is valued for low angle terrain that helps maintain a recreational amenity distinct from other local winter motorized zones. As a result, over-snow vehicle use will be allowed to continue in the SMA.

The GPLI has consulted with RMBL about the area to ensure that adjoining boundaries between the SMA proposed by RMBL and the Deer Creek Wilderness/SMA accommodate RMBL's research sites and operational needs; this includes a 700ft buffer west of Brush Creek to accommodate current RMBL research sites.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- Over-snow motorized vehicle use not allowed
- See common elements on page 44

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Desire by RMBL and many others for the area to be permanently managed for scientific research, as well as providing for ranching, recreation, and other compatible existing uses
- Existing and proposed mountain bike trails in the area
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Areas
- Existing Gothic Mountain Tour ski race through the area

Rationale for Recommendation

The Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory (RMBL) and the GPLI propose that the certain Forest Service land adjacent to RMBL's research laboratory and lands north near Schofield Park be managed for scientific research and other compatible uses. Approximately 60-70% of RMBL's research occurs in this area. To ensure the long-term success of the laboratory and its ecological and biological research, the area should be explicitly managed with an emphasis on scientific research through an SMA.

The proposal would allow for existing and proposed non-motorized recreation (including the Gothic Mountain Tour ski race), as well as ranching, to continue in the East River Valley. Designation of this SMA would not affect rights of access to private property, including in Schofield Park and surrounding areas.

The GPLI feels strongly that RMBL's research is a high value for Gunnison County's public lands and that the proposed SMA should be permanently protected in a manner that sustains and fosters that research. The GPLI and RMBL collaborated to further common objectives and reconcile differences between RMBL's initial SMA proposal, GPLI's initial wilderness and SMA proposal, and other stakeholder interests in the area.

POVERTY GULCH PROTECTION AREA AND WILDERNESS ADDITION

Proposed Designations

1. An addition to the Raggeds Wilderness to the base of Schuylkill Ridge
2. An SMA in Poverty Gulch contiguous to the wilderness addition extending from Gunsight Pass Road on the south along the west side of Slate River Road. SMA stipulations include:
   - Summer motorized vehicle use not allowed
   - No new motorized or mechanized vehicle uses beyond those existing at the time of enactment, with a savings provision for the potential construction of a mechanized Lower Loop trail extension and potential motorized winter grooming of that trail
   - Primary purposes include protection of naturalness and undeveloped character
   - See common elements on page 44

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Potential for a mechanized Lower Loop trail extension, proposed alignment GPS'ed and on record
- Desire by winter motorized users to maintain access to Baxter Basin by way of Poverty Gulch Road
- Desire by RMBL to maintain access to research sites adjacent to proposed wilderness addition
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Protection of wildlife migration routes and an area of High Biodiversity Significance (B3)
- Ability to retain the wild and natural characteristics of the area
- The potential for a molybdenum mine in the area. The claims block for a potential Red Lady Mine is adjacent to this area
- Future desire for motorized grooming to provide a winter recreation amenity for non-motorized recreation including cross-country skiing and mountain biking on the Lower Loop and potential trail extension

Rationale for Recommendation

Wilderness designation is recommended for the southern section of this area to bring the boundary of the Raggeds Wilderness down the steep slopes of Schuylkill Ridge to its base just above the Slate River. This will help to protect ecological and other wilderness values. Boundaries were designed to avoid conflicts with RMBL research and potential mechanized trail development.

The GPLI also recommended an SMA that would drop from the wilderness addition boundary over to a setback from Slate River Road and down to Gunsight Pass Road. This SMA would help to protect the migration corridor for wildlife from the Slate River to the peaks of the Raggeds Wilderness, while still allowing (through a savings provision) for the potential development of a Lower Loop extension to be built if approved by land management agencies. The potential track has been GPS'ed and boundaries revised to allow for the future opportunity if approved through land management planning processes. The Crested Butte Nordic Center and Crested Butte Mountain Bike Association would also like to preserve the potential for future motorized grooming of the Lower Loop and potential Lower Loop Trail extension for winter non-motorized recreation.

Winter motorized use in portions of Poverty Gulch and Baxter Basin are highly valued by backcountry skiers and snowmobilers. In order to provide for these and other recreational values, the GPLI proposed an SMA in Baxter Basin that would allow for winter motorized use, while prohibiting new roads or trails and industrial use. These stipulations seek to balance the area's wilderness character, important wildlife habitat and corridors, and recreational opportunities.

HORSE RANCH PARK RECREATION AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

Photo: John Fielder

- Summer motorized vehicle use not allowed
- No new motorized or mechanized vehicle uses beyond those existing at the time of enactment, with a savings provision that would allow for the potential development of the Crested Butte to Paonia trail (including the Wagon Trail), Crested Butte to Carbondale trail, and Dark Canyon Loop trail, for mechanized use
- Emphasis on recreation and conservation as primary purposes
- See common elements on page 44

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Highly-valued and heavily used winter motorized recreation
- Motorized backcountry ski access for Ruby and Owen Peaks
- Area of High (B3) Biodiversity Significance
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Second largest aspen forest in the world
- Connectivity between the Raggeds Wilderness and the West Elk Wilderness
- Kebler Pass is a scenic byway

Rationale for Recommendation

This area – along with the Beckwiths – is home to the most heavily-used winter motorized recreation corridor in the County. It is highly valued as a motorized access corridor for backcountry skiers looking to summit Ruby and Owen Peaks.

The area has a high degree of naturalness and is known for its spectacular beauty. It is one of a few heavily photographed locations on the West Elk Scenic byway.

The GPLI decided that this area was better suited for an SMA, rather than wilderness designation. Winter motorized users highly value this area and the GPLI agreed that it was necessary to recognize this use in the area.

The SMA will provide additional protections for the landscape to maintain its remote backcountry feel. This should enhance the long-term recreational value of the area, while protecting the naturalness of the area.

BECKWITHS SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA

Photo: Mitch Warnick

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- Summer motorized not allowed
- No new motorized or mechanized vehicle uses beyond those existing at the time of enactment, with a savings provision that would allow for the potential development of the Crested Butte to Paonia trail and Crested Butte to Carbondale trail
- Emphasis on recreation and conservation as primary purposes
- See common elements on page 44

Additional considerations:

- The GPLI would prefer that if the Crested Butte to Paonia Trail is constructed in the future, it should be built near the outer border of the Beckwiths SMA, rather than through the middle of the area. However, consistent with the foundational principle that such travel management decisions are beyond the scope of the GPLI, a decision regarding whether and where such a trail may be built would be left to the Forest Service and its public processes for making such determinations.

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Highly-valued and heavily used winter motorized recreation
- Highly-valued and heavily used non-motorized recreation
- Colorado River cutthroat trout in Coal Creek and Snowshoe Creek
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Areas of High (B3) Biodiversity Significance
- Second largest aspen forest in the world
- Connectivity between the Raggeds Wilderness and the West Elk Wilderness
- Kebler Pass is a scenic byway
- The future construction of a Crested Butte to Carbondale and Crested Butte to Paonia Trail

Rationale for Recommendation

This area is home to the most heavily-used winter motorized recreation corridor in the County. It is highly valued by hikers, campers, equestrian users, backcountry skiers and snowmobilers, and is accessed from the east (Crested Butte) and the west (Paonia).

The area has several streams with Colorado River cutthroat trout, serves as an important link for connectivity between the West Elk Wilderness and Raggeds Wilderness, and is home to the second largest aspen forest in the world. Some of this area, particularly Snowshoe Mesa, has high wilderness character.

Originally, the GPLI recommended a small wilderness addition following the base of East and West Beckwith mountains. Through community outreach, the GPLI learned this area is used for winter motorized recreation. In meeting with the Gunnison Field Office Recreation Planning Team it was determined the area has inconsistent records for winter travel management direction.

As such, the GPLI revised the recommendation to remove the proposed Beckwith Wilderness Addition and has now included the area in the Beckwith SMA. This allows more flexibility in managing and balancing recreational (including snowmobiling and mountain biking), wildland, wildlife, and watershed values across the landscape.

MUNSEY CREEK/ERICKSON SPRINGS WILDERNESS ADDITION AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA

Proposed Designations:

1. A wilderness addition from the existing Raggeds Wilderness boundary to the Raggeds Trail
2. A SMA from the Raggeds Trail to the private property boundary with the following stipulations:
    - No new motorized or mechanized vehicle uses, beyond those existing at the time of enactment, with a savings provision that would allow for the potential development of the Crested Butte to Carbondale trail
    - Primary purposes include protection of naturalness and undeveloped character
    - See common elements on page 44

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Water supply for the Town of Paonia
- Winter range for elk and bald eagles
- Summer range for elk and mule deer
- Populations of Colorado River cutthroat trout
- Mapped lynx and turkey habitat
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- High potential for oil and gas leasing and existing oil and gas leases
- Potential development of the Crested Butte to Carbondale Trail adjacent to the wilderness addition and within the wildlife conservation area with potential realignments and improvements to the Raggeds Trail.
- Motorized and mechanized use along the Raggeds Trail
- Overlap with Thompson Divide Withdrawal and Protection Act of 2017

Rationale for Recommendation

The initial recommendation of the GPLI had this area in the 'Considered for SMA and/or Wilderness, To Be Vetted with Regional Communities category. During community outreach that started in June of 2017, the GPLI received positive feedback from local and regional stakeholders for a combination SMA and Wilderness designation. The SMA designation would allow for continued motorized and mechanized recreation on the Raggeds Trail, as well as continued winter motorized recreation in the area, but would restrict expansion of those uses.

This area has a high degree of naturalness and supports a valuable backcountry hunting experience. The GPLI discussed that the wilderness boundary could potentially be expanded to the new alignment of the Crested Butte to Carbondale Trail, if stakeholders in the North Fork and Gunnison Valley feel comfortable with the proposed trail alignment. This area is in the watershed for the North Fork Valley, which is one of the largest suppliers of local, organic agriculture on the Western Slope.

WHETSTONE HEADWATERS PROTECTION AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- No new motorized or mechanized vehicle use beyond those existing at the time of enactment, with a savings provision that would allow for the potential development of the Splain's Gulch Connector, Whetstone/ Carbon Loop, Baxter and Gunnison to Crested Butte Trails
- Primary purposes include protection of naturalness and undeveloped character
- See common elements on page 44

Additional considerations:

1. The proposed Splain's Gulch Connector could be motorized, but not the Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail. A savings provision would need to accommodate these different potential uses, subject to the land management agency review.
2. BHA asked CBMBA to consider not looping the top section of the Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail.
3. The GPLI agreed to general savings clause language that reads, "*Nothing in this section [i.e. the designation of the SMA(s)] affects the Secretary's authority to construct or reject a non-motorized recreation trail proposed by Gunnison Trails and CBMBA, called the Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail, Whetstone/Baxter Loop, and Splains Gulch Connector in accordance with applicable law".* The GPLI understands that the language may be tweaked in the drafting of legislation, but asked to be consulted on changes.

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Potential mine development on Mt. Emmons and the possibility for the construction of a tailings pond near the Carbon Creek Trail
- Big game habitat and excellent hunting opportunities
- Wilderness character including a high degree of naturalness and wildlife habit for northern goshawk, pine marten, mule deer, and elk among others with this area being adjacent to home ranges for several lynx
- Highly-valued winter motorized recreation near Splain's Gulch, Mt Axtell, and the Carbon Creek drainage
- Motorized and mechanized use on the Carbon Creek and Para Me, Para Te trails (Carbon Creek Trail). Mechanized use on the Green Lake Trail.
- Overlaps Colorado Roadless Area
- Construction of a Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail is highly desired by the mountain biking community. Additional desire for the construction of a Splain's Gulch Connector. CBMBA also has plans to reroute the Carbon Trail.
- High biodiversity significance (B3)
- Protection of the Coal Creek Watershed – Crested Butte's drinking water

Recommendation rationale

Whetstone is a pristine natural area with excellent recreational opportunities right outside of Crested Butte. This area is highly valued with many of the GPLI's member's primary concerns overlapping in this area.

This recommendation seeks to protect ecological and recreational values, while balancing the various needs of members of the community. The GPLI members were in consensus that this area should never be open to mining, oil and gas drilling, or other industrial activities. A mineral withdrawal for this area is a top priority for the group.

The GPLI also recommended no wilderness for this area, as the two possible proposed wilderness areas would be very small (barely surpassing the 5,000-acre requirement) and could be potentially difficult to manage. Some GPLI members were also concerned about limiting winter motorized use.

The SMA's stipulations seek to balance the area's wilderness character, important wildlife habitat, watershed values, and recreational opportunities. The SMA would generally limit motorized and mechanized trails to those currently established and proposed, as to protect wildlife habitat and wilderness character. Current trails would be unaffected by the SMA designation, as would current snowmobiling on the landscape

By including a savings clause in the SMA language, the Whetstone designation would not preclude the potential development of the Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail, Whetstone/Carbon Loop, Baxter West, and the Splain's Gulch Connector. These trails would still need to pass agency review before being constructed. In effect, the savings clause would not change the potential trail construction to be either more or less likely than what it is now.

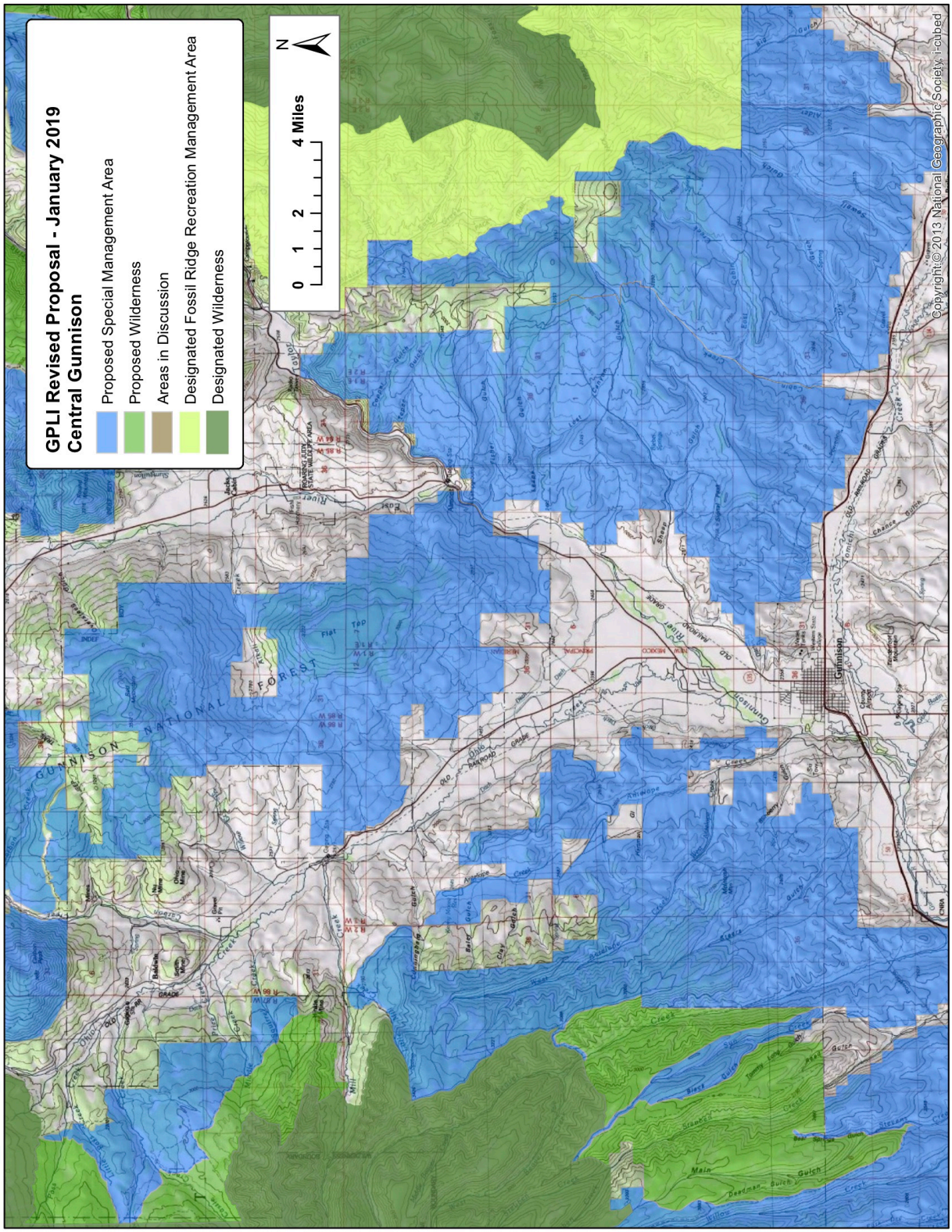
EXISTING WEST ELK WILDERNESS BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT

Recommendation rationale

While adjustment of boundaries of existing wilderness areas is very rare and typically controversial, the GPLI believes that this adjustment is appropriate given the important and unique public safety considerations and the benefits of the boundary adjustment to the administration of the existing West Elk Wilderness.

A boundary adjustment of approximately 15 acres has been GPS'ed and is recorded on the GPLI map.

Central Gunnison



FLAT TOP WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- Motorized vehicle use not allowed
- No new motorized or mechanized vehicle uses, beyond those existing at the time of enactment, with the exception of a savings provision that would allow for the potential development of the mechanized Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail
- Continued allowance of restoration efforts such as the Wet Meadows Resiliency Project
- Legislation should prescribe seasonal closures for potential mechanized use to protect critical wildlife habitat, subject to degree and timing determined by the managing agency
- Emphasis on wildlife conservation as primary purpose
- See common elements on page 44

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

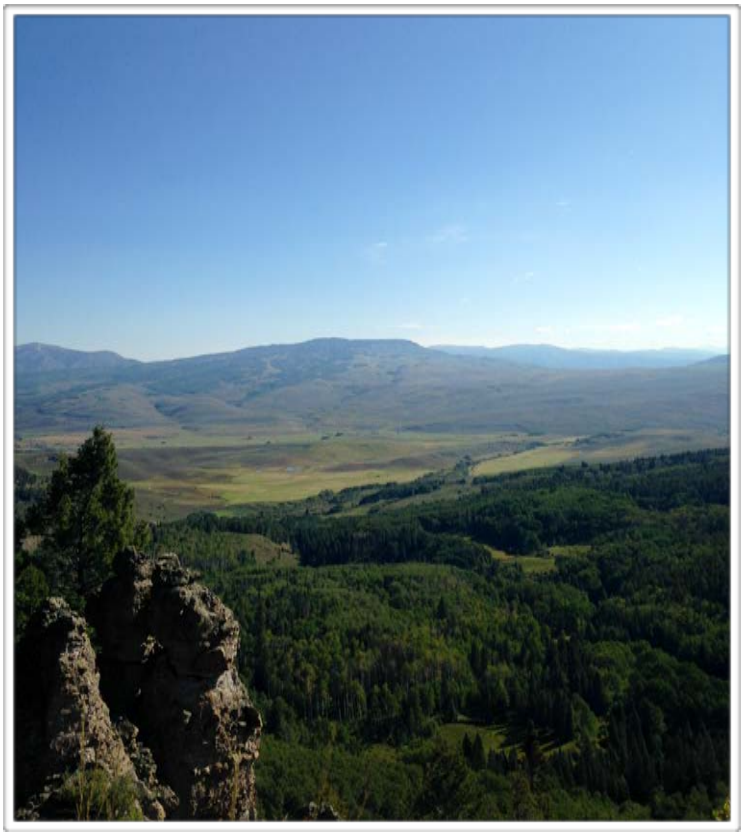
- Construction of a Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail
- Tier-1 Sage Grouse habitat and known leks
- High Biodiversity Significance (B1)
- Underrepresented ecosystem type (sagebrush) in the nation's protected areas
- Ongoing habitat restoration projects, including the Wet Meadows Resiliency Project
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- High-value big game habitat for mule deer and elk (Mule Deer: migration routes, winter range, Elk: migration routes, winter ranges, and production areas)
- Potential for increased recreation to affect grazing opportunities and wildlife management

Rationale for Recommendation

This SMA recommendation attempts to balance desired recreation opportunities, sensitive species, big game habitat, and grazing. By limiting new roads and trails (beyond the potential Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail), the SMA will prevent habitat fragmentation and water pollution, protecting the area's wildlife and water quality.

The group has varied opinions about the potential construction of a Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail. The group agreed to a savings clause (identical to the one in Whetstone) that does not preclude the building of the trail. The savings clause does not take a stand to

either build or not build the trail and would leave construction and management subject to agency determination. The group agreed to general savings clause language that reads, "*Nothing in this section [i.e. the designation of the SMA(s)] affects the Secretary's authority to construct or reject a non-motorized recreation trail proposed by Gunnison Trails and CBMBA, called the Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail, in accordance with applicable law".* The group understand that the language may be tweaked in the drafting of legislation, but asked to be consulted on changes.



This allows the GPLI to ensure that additional protections for the area, such as a mineral withdrawal and no new roads could be enacted legislatively, while allowing groups to advocate for their desired position on the trail at the administrative level in the future.

The group is in consensus that habitat restoration efforts should continue in the area and that SMA language should not prohibit projects such as the Wet Meadows Resiliency Project.

SIGNAL PEAK SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- No new motorized or mechanized vehicle use, beyond those existing at the time of enactment, with savings provisions that would allow for the potential development of:
    - the Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail
    - trails identified in the Urban Interface Recreation Area in the Gunnison sage-grouse Candidate Conservation Agreement (CCA)
    - Continued allowance of restoration efforts such as the Wet Meadows Resiliency Project
- Legislation should prescribe seasonal closures for motorized and mechanized use to protect critical wildlife habitat, subject to degree and timing determined by the managing agency
- Primary purposes include protection of naturalness and undeveloped character.
- See common elements on page 44

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Desired construction of a Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail
- Construction of a stacked loop trail system for the Signal Peak area
- Tier-1 Sage Grouse habitat and known leks
- High Biodiversity Significance (B1)
- Underrepresented ecosystem type (sagebrush) in the nation's protected areas
- Ongoing habitat restoration projects, including the Wet Meadows Resiliency Project
- Winter Range for mule deer and elk. Mule deer migration routes.
- Potential for increased recreation to affect grazing opportunities and wildlife management
- Some winter motorized use
- Area managed for wildlife, including the option for CPW to place a restriction on winter motorized and mechanized use in high snow years

Rationale for Recommendation

The issues in the Signal Peak area are very similar to the Flat Top area. The goal of the SMA recommendation is to balance wildlife concerns with existing recreational uses and the desire for potential trail development.

The GPLI is in agreement that this area should continue to allow for existing motorized and mechanized recreation uses and habitat restoration efforts, including the Wet

Meadows Resiliency Project. These stipulations would protect wildlife, ensure a high-quality recreational experience, and protect grazing.

The GPLI recommends a 'savings clause', essentially identical to the one discussed in the Whetstone and Flat Top area, for the Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail in this area. The group agreed to general savings provision language for the Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail that reads, "*Nothing in this section [i.e. the designation of the SMA(s)] affects the Secretary's authority to construct or reject a non-motorized recreation trail proposed by Gunnison Trails and CBMBA, called the Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail, in accordance with applicable law".* The GPLI understands that the language may be tweaked in the drafting of legislation, but asked to be consulted on changes.

Since the development of this recommendation, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has issued a Decision Record to authorize Gunnison Trails to construct and maintain signal track trails in the southwestern part of this proposal. The approved trails are consistent with the Candidate Conservation Agreement management of the Gunnison Sage-grouse habitat within the Signal Peak Urban Interface Recreation Area. This is also consistent with the foundational principle that such travel management decisions are beyond the scope of the GPLI and the BLM decision should not be impacted by a special management decision. Existing road and trail use could continue under the proposed designation.

The GPLI agrees that outside of the proposed and existing roads and trails described above, the area should be managed for wildlife habitat. The area is winter range for deer and elk and is home to Sage-grouse leks and a rare species of milkvetch.

CABIN CREEK WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- No new motorized or mechanized vehicle use, beyond those existing at the time of enactment
- Legislation should prescribe seasonal closures for motorized and mechanized use to protect critical wildlife habitat, subject to degree and timing determined by the managing agency
- Primary purposes include protection of wildlife habitat, naturalness and undeveloped character
- See common elements on page 44

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Tier-1 Sage Grouse habitat and known leks
- High Biodiversity Significance (B1)
- Underrepresented ecosystem type (sagebrush) in the nation's protected areas
- Ongoing habitat restoration projects
- Winter Range for mule deer and elk. Mule deer migration routes.
- Potential for increased recreation to affect grazing opportunities and wildlife management
- Minimal winter motorized use
- Area managed for wildlife, including the option for restrictions on winter motorized and mechanized use

Rationale for Recommendation

During the recommendation setting phase of the GPLI process, the group began to consider a larger boundary adjacent to the Signal Peak recommendation originally proposed by BHA. As critical winter range for deer and elk, and other sensitive species, including Gunnison sage-grouse, the GPLI felt it was prudent to protect this critical area.

To do so, boundaries were drawn to the Taylor River Road to the north, to the existing Fossil Ridge Recreation Management Area to the northwest, to County Road 76 to the west, and Highway 50 to the south. In combination with the Signal Peak recommendation, the current Fossil Ridge Recreation Management Area and Fossil Ridge Wilderness, the GPLI aims to provide landscape scale protections that are critical to reduce habitat fragmentation and human disturbances that make it difficult for wildlife to thrive, especially in harsh winters. This recommendation supports the adjacent Van Tuyl State Wildlife Area in acknowledging and managing for this critical habitat.

The GPLI has worked with winter motorized users and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), to better understand snowmobiling impacts to wildlife and critical winter habitat in this proposal. Unfragmented and undisturbed winter habitats are key to ensuring that negative impacts are minimized.

The goal of the SMA recommendation is to balance wildlife concerns with existing recreational uses. As such, the GPLI recommends a Wildlife Conservation Area. Current winter motorized use is infrequent and light in the area, and continuing use would not be foreclosed by the designation. Rather, such winter motorized use would be permitted to continue to the extent it remain consistent with the protection of wildlife in this critical area. If, for example, winter motorized uses increase significantly or wildlife population or habitat conditions are particularly sensitive during a particular time, such use could be restricted to protect wildlife.

CASTLE SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA AND WILDERNESS ADDITION

Proposed Designations:

1. A wilderness addition from the existing West Elk Wilderness Boundary to the Lowline Trail
2. An SMA from the Lowline Trail to the private property boundary with the following stipulations:
    - Motorized vehicle use not allowed
    - Mechanized recreation not allowed, except on the Lowline Trail
    - No new motorized or mechanized vehicle use, beyond those existing at the time of enactment
    - Primary purposes include protection of naturalness and undeveloped character.
    - See common elements on page 44

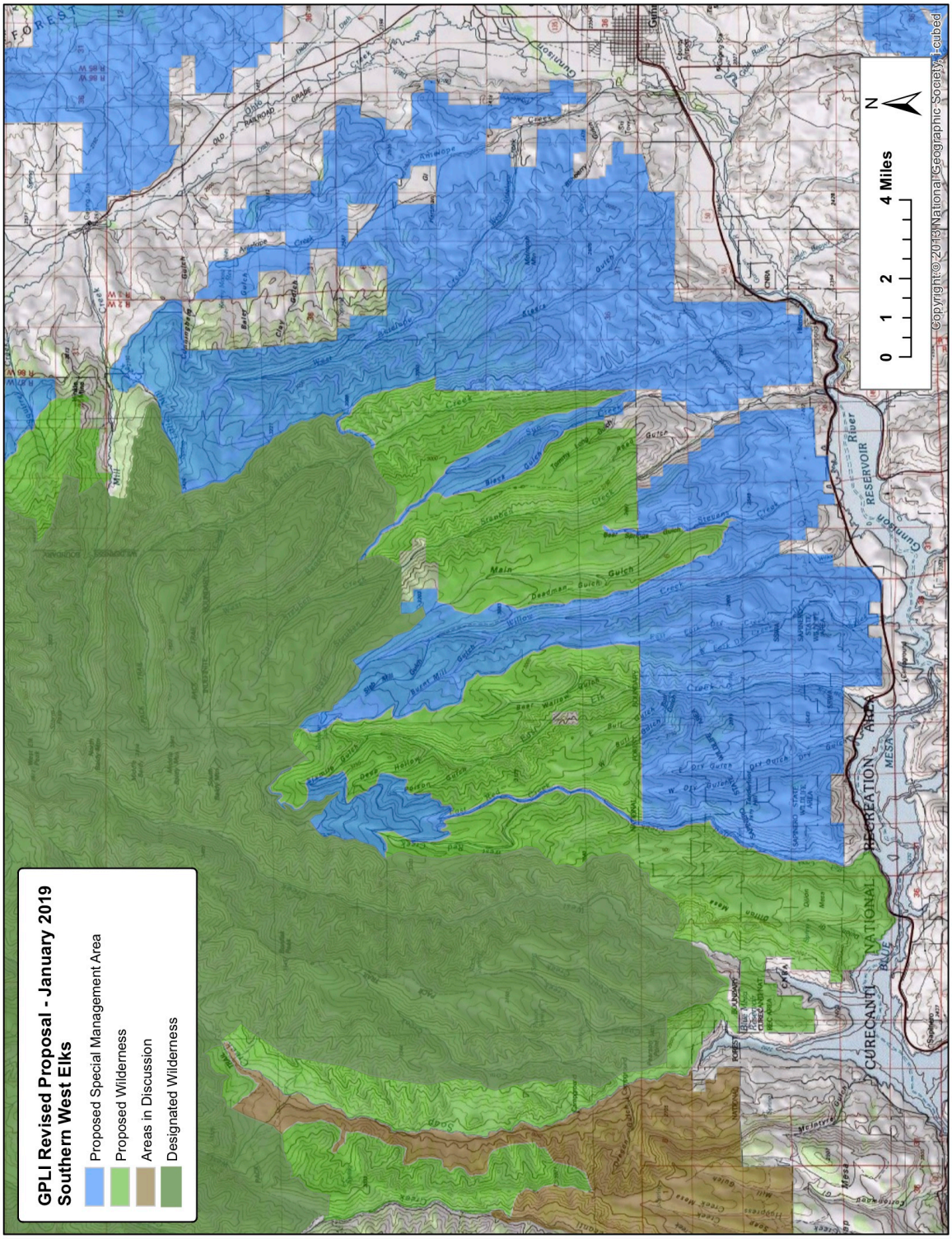
Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Tier-1 and Tier-2 Sage-grouse habitat
- Areas of Outstanding (B1) and High (B3) Biodiversity Significance
- Elk winter range, production areas, and migration corridors. Mule deer winter range and migration. Bighorn sheep winter range.
- Overlaps with designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Willow and riparian habitats along Little Pass Creek and South Castle Creek
- Existing mechanized use on the Lowline Trail, along with potential realignments and improvements
- Existing ditches and water structures

Rationale for Recommendation

The Castle landscape enjoys a high degree of wilderness characteristics due to high quality opportunities for solitude, primitive/unconfined recreation, and quality habitat. The GPLI believes that this area should be protected for its wildlife habitat, recreational value, and scenic beauty. The recommended SMA would limit habitat fragmentation and water quality degradation by prohibiting extractive uses, as well as new roads and trails. The SMA would allow continued mechanized recreational use on the Lowline trail.

West Elks


GPLI Revised Proposal - January 2019
Southern West Elks
Proposed Special Management Area
Proposed Wilderness
Areas in Discussion
Designated Wilderness
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SOAP CREEK WILDERNESS ADDITION

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Bighorn sheep winter range, production, migration routes and overall range
- Critically important elk migration corridor and high quality winter range
- Migration corridor for mule deer
- Hosts wild turkey, peregrine falcon, mountain lion, and black bear
- Suitable habitat for lynx with documented cases of collared lynx
- Potential habitat for Gunnison Sage-grouse
- Winter habitat for bald eagles with several roost site locations
- Remote, with outstanding opportunities for high quality recreation in solitude
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Area of Moderate Biodiversity Significance (B4)

Rationale for Recommendation

Soap Creek has outstanding ecological and wilderness values. With no conflicting on-the-ground uses, the GPLI proposed the area for wilderness designation.

EAST ELK CREEK WILDERNESS ADDITION

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Winter range and migration corridors for mule deer and elk
- Elk production area
- Overall range and production area for bighorn sheep
- Riparian habitat

Rationale for Recommendation

East Elk Creek, like the other proposed additions to the West Elk Wilderness, has exceptional habitat. It is also remote, rugged terrain, with a high-quality wilderness characteristics. There are no known on-the-ground conflicting uses, so the GPLI proposed the area for wilderness designation.

STUEBENS CREEK WILDERNESS ADDITION

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Mule deer and elk winter range
- Overall bighorn range
- Migration route for mule deer
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Conservation Population of Colorado River cutthroat trout
- Area of High (B3) Biodiversity significance
- Lynx and bald eagle habitat

Rationale for Recommendation

Like the Beaver Roadless Area, the Steuben Roadless Area has exceptional wilderness qualities and high-quality wildlife habitat. There are no known current uses in the area that conflict with wilderness designation, so the GPLI recommended this area as a wilderness addition.

BEAVER CREEK WILDERNESS ADDITION

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Sensitive riparian woodland
- Winter habitat for elk and mule deer
- Overall range for bighorn sheep
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Conservation Population of Colorado River cutthroat trout in West Antelope Creek
- Area of High (B3) Biodiversity Significance

Rationale for Recommendation

The Beaver Roadless area provides some of the most high-quality wildlife habitat in Gunnison County. It is in critical winter range for big game and is near a conservation population of Colorado River cutthroat trout.

There are currently no known uses in the area that are not compatible with wilderness designation, and the GPLI recommended that this area be protected as wilderness, due to its exceptional ecological value and wilderness character.

DILLON MESA WILDERNESS ADDITION

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Geological formations
- Bighorn sheep winter range, production, migration routes and overall range
- Winter range for mule deer and elk
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Migration corridor for mule deer
- Tier 1 and Tier 2 Gunnison sage-grouse habitat

Rationale for Recommendation

Because of the exceptional wildlife habitat and wilderness characteristics, along with the lack of conflicting uses, the GPLI proposed Dillon Mesa for wilderness designation.

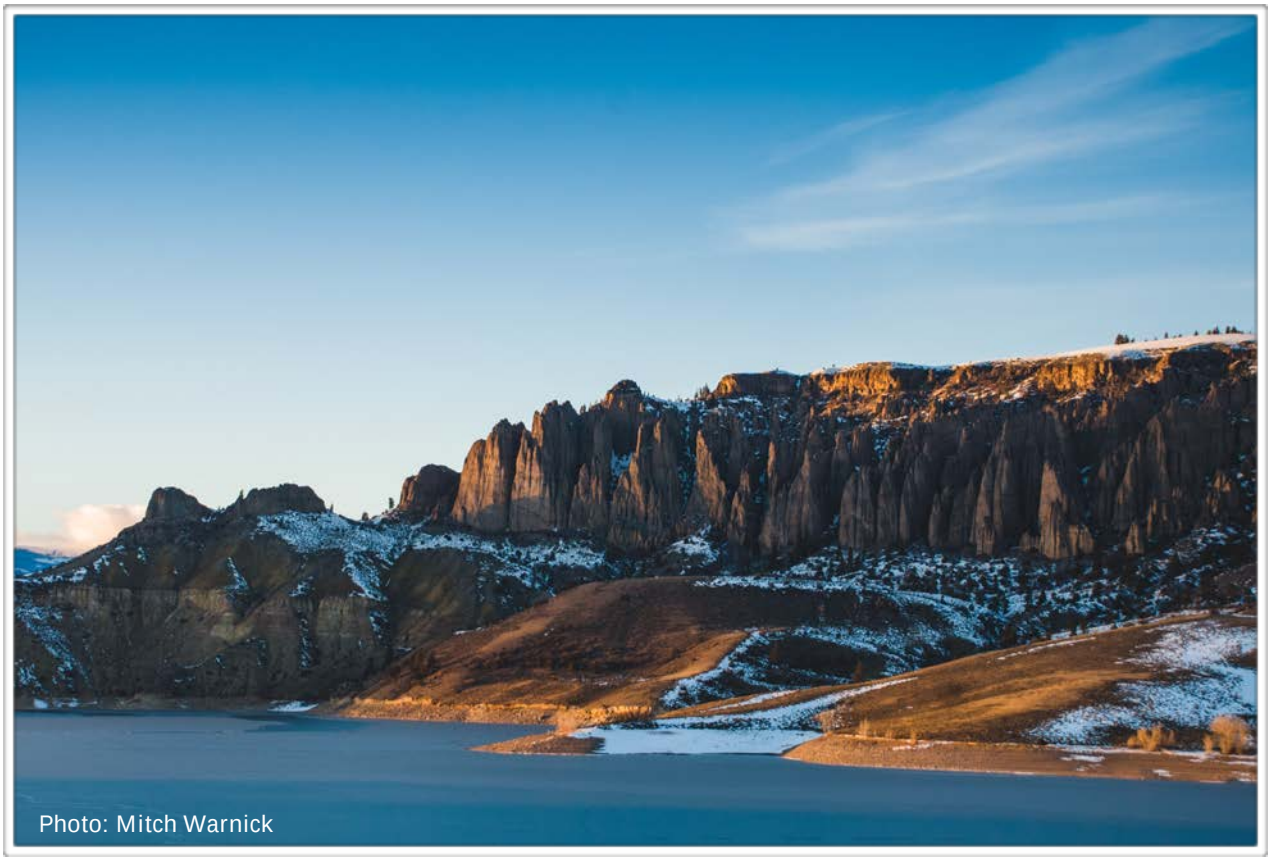


Photo: Mitch Warnick

PALISADES SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- Over-snow motor vehicle use not allowed
- No new motorized or mechanized vehicle use, beyond those existing at the time of enactment with a savings provision that would allow for the potential development of the Antelope Ridge Trail and connector, East West Antelope Trail, West West Antelope Trail, and Mill Creek connector
- Legislation should prescribe seasonal closures for mechanized use to protect critical wildlife habitat, subject to degree and timing determined by the managing agency
- Continued allowance of restoration efforts such as the Wet Meadows Resiliency Project
- Primary purposes include protection of naturalness and undeveloped character.
- See common elements on page 44

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Tier 1 and Tier 2 Gunnison sage-grouse habitat with known Gunnison sage-grouse leks
- Areas of Outstanding (B1) and High (B3) Biodiversity Significance
- Winter range, production, migration corridors, and overall range for mule deer and elk
- BLM Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and underrepresented ecosystem type (sagebrush) in the nations protected areas
- Conservation populations of Colorado River cutthroat trout in West Antelope and Beaver Creeks
- High-use in the area just west of Wiley Land from hikers, equestrian users, and snowshoers
- Gunnison Trails has proposed two new loop trails in the northern part of the proposal area, as well as a connector trail to Mill Creek. While the BLM will make final use decisions, these trails could be open to both motorized and mechanized use.
- The trail beginning in Van Tuyl could also be open for hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing (with no grooming) during the winter, if wildlife was not stressed by extreme winter conditions

Rationale for Recommendation

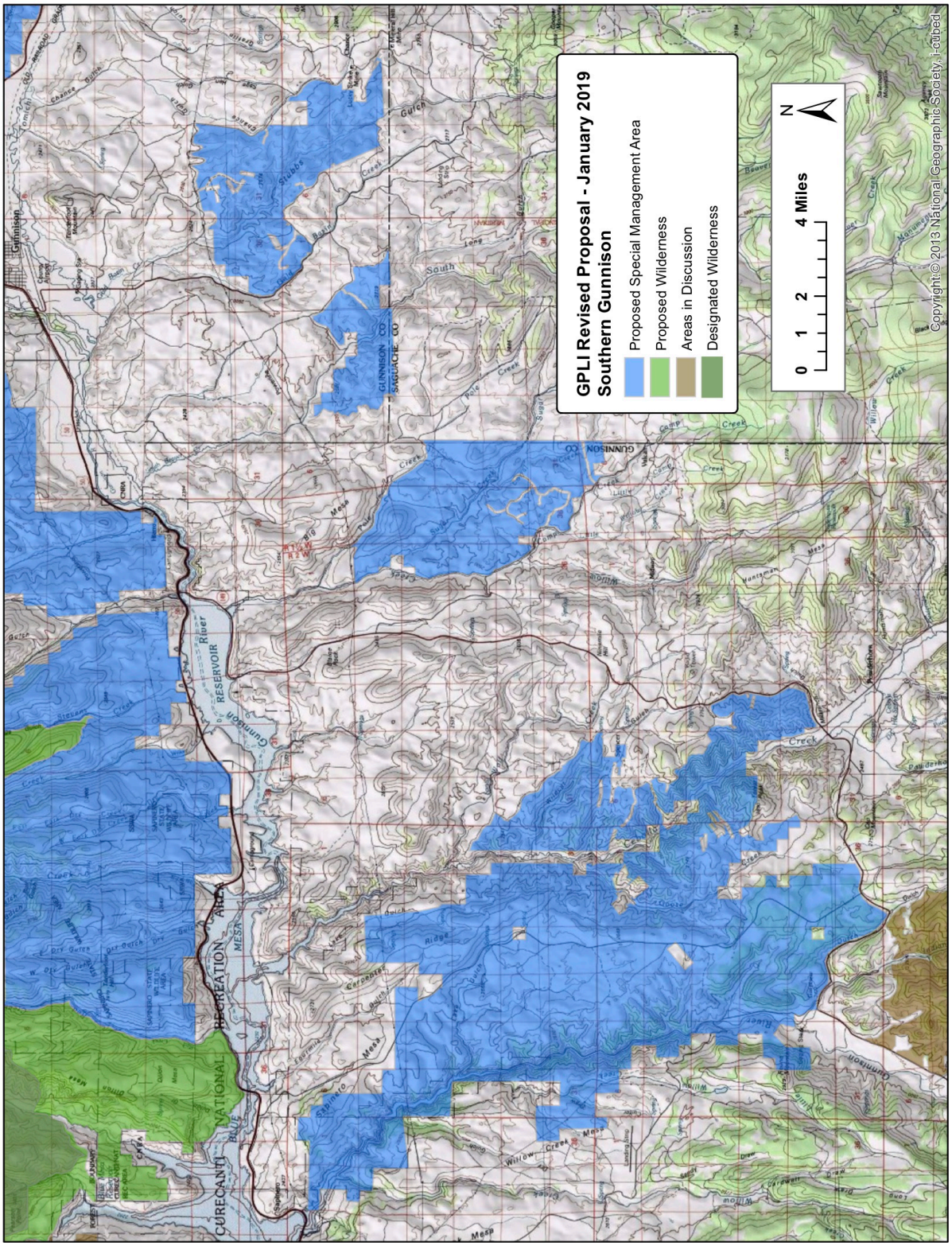
Originally, this area was proposed as two separate SMA's – McIntosh and Palisade – but as the management directions are the same the two were combined for manageability. With Gunnison sage-grouse leks, winter habitat and migration corridors for big-game, and several sensitive plant species, is some of the most important habitat in Gunnison County. This area is proposed for its exceptional wildlife values, including sensitive and threatened species, winter habitat, and Colorado River cutthroat trout conservation populations.

As McIntosh Mountain is also close to town, Gunnison Trails sees the area as valuable for improving the accessibility of recreation to local residents and providing more options to a growing population. The proposed new trails from Gunnison Trails primarily don't overlap with these critical wildlife areas and where they do, more sustainable trails, in comparison to the existing routes used on the ground, could provide a benefit to wildlife. However, consistent with the foundational principle that such travel management decisions are beyond the scope of the GPLI, a decision regarding whether and where such a trail may be built would be left to the Forest Service and its public processes for making such determinations.

The proposed SMA would allow existing uses to continue, including motorized and mechanized travel on system roads and trails and forest health treatments, as such through the SBEADMR project. The GPLI believes that both the recreational and wildlife values of this area make the area unsuitable for industrial development or new roads. The SMA would then provide permanent protection for this critical ecological resource by limiting future development.

The GPLI also believes that in this area, as in all areas that it has discussed, restoration efforts for climate change and the Gunnison sage-grouse, such as the Wet Meadows Resiliency Project, should be able to continue.

Southern Gunnison



SOUTH BEAVER CREEK WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- Motorized and mechanized vehicle use not allowed
- Continued allowance of restoration efforts such as the Wet Meadows Resiliency Project
- Emphasis on wildlife conservation as primary purpose
- See common elements on page 44

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Tier-1 Sage Grouse habitat and known leks
- Area of Outstanding (B1) Biodiversity Significance
- Overlaps with BLM 'Lands with Wilderness Characteristics' and 'Area of Critical Environmental Concern' designations
- Underrepresented ecosystem type (sagebrush) in the nation's protected areas
- Winter Range for mule deer, pronghorn, and elk.
- Proximity of Hartman Rocks, the Aberdeen Trail and historic Quarry
- Potential for the Old Spanish National Historic Trail to overlap with the SMA boundary
- Potential for the Wet Meadows Resiliency Restoration Projects in the area

Rationale for Recommendation

The areas that TU proposed as its Winter Wildlife Special Management Areas (Cebolla Creek, Sugar Creek, South Beaver Creek, and Stubb's Gulch) all have exceptional wildlife habitat. South Beaver Creek, in particular, is notable in that it has both of the BLM's 'Lands with Wilderness Characteristics' and 'Area of Critical Environmental Concern' designations.

The GPLI agreed that these wildlife values should be protected through an SMA that includes a mineral withdrawal, no new roads, no motorized or mechanized use, and guidance that the area should be managed for wildlife. No oil and gas leases, mining claims, roads, or trails currently exist in the area.

The South Beaver Creek area lies directly adjacent to the Aberdeen Trail and within the backcountry zone of Hartman Rocks Urban Interface Area, designated the Gunnison sage-grouse Citizen Conservation Agreement. The South Beaver Creek Area lies outside all existing and planned recreational trails at Hartman Rocks. Because the Aberdeen Trail was built recently, and according to sustainable trail guidelines, a standard 50' buffer should be sufficient for this trail.

The South Beaver Creek proposal area, along with Stubb's Gulch, lies in the general vicinity of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail. While the GPLI generally does not want to interfere with the establishment of historic trails, some members were concerned about whether or not the establishment of this trail would allow motorized or mechanized use in the area, as it is sensitive wildlife habitat. The designation of an SMA should not affect the designation of an on-the-ground route of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail in this area, but would ensure that any such established on-the-ground trail was non-motorized and non-mechanized.

SUGAR CREEK WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- Motorized and mechanized vehicle use not allowed
- Continued allowance of restoration efforts such as the Wet Meadows Resiliency Project
- Emphasis on wildlife conservation as primary purpose
- See common elements on page 44

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Tier-1 Sage Grouse habitat and known leks
- Area of Outstanding (B1) Biodiversity Significance
- Overlaps with a BLM 'Lands with Wilderness Characteristics' designation
- Underrepresented ecosystem type (sagebrush) in the nation's protected areas
- Winter Range for mule deer and elk.

Rationale for Recommendation

The Sugar Creek area has exceptional qualities for wildlife habitat. The GPLI believes this area should be managed for wildlife and other compatible uses. No system roads or trails exist in this area, so the GPLI believes that the area should be closed to all motorized and mechanized use. An existing system 4WD route off of County Road 31 will be excluded from the SMA with a cherry stem. To prevent habitat fragmentation, the GPLI also believes that the area should be closed to all mining and oil and gas drilling. There are no mining or oil and gas claims in the area.

STUBBS GULCH
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- Motorized recreation not allowed
- No new mechanized vehicle uses, beyond those existing at the time of enactment, with a savings provision that would allow for the potential development of the W Mountain to Bambi's Trail
- Continued allowance of restoration efforts such as the Wet Meadows Resiliency Project
- Legislation should prescribe seasonal closures for mechanized vehicle use to protect critical wildlife habitat, subject to degree and timing determined by the managing agency
- Emphasis on wildlife conservation as primary purpose
- See common elements on page 44

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Tier-1 Sage Grouse habitat and known leks
- Area of Outstanding (B1) Biodiversity Significance
- Overlaps with a BLM 'Lands with Wilderness Characteristics' designation
- Underrepresented ecosystem type (sagebrush) in the nation's protected areas
- Winter Range for mule deer and elk.
- Proposed trail from the back of Tenderfoot (W) Mountain to Bambi's Trail in Hartman Rocks that could traverse this area. The Old Spanish National Historic Trail could traverse this area

Rationale for Recommendation

Stubb's Gulch is a relatively undisturbed area in an otherwise heavily altered landscape. This area is prime habitat for big game, Sage-grouse, and a threatened plant species (Gunnison Milkvetch). The GPLI agreed that Stubb's Gulch, as with the other areas in TU's original Winter Wildlife Areas proposals (Cebolla Creek, Sugar Creek, South Beaver Creek, and Stubb's Gulch), should be protected for these biodiversity values.

Currently, there are no existing roads, motorized or mechanized trails, mining claims, or oil and gas leases in the area. Gunnison Trails has proposed a new connector trail from the backside of Tenderfoot (W) Mountain to Bambi's Trail in Hartman Rocks. The GPLI agreed that a reasonable compromise would be to use a savings clause to allow for the possible construction and mechanized use of this trail. If the trail ultimately is built, the GPLI believes that it should be routed as close to the edge of the designated area as possible. However, consistent with the foundational principle that such travel

management decisions are beyond the scope of the GPLI, a decision regarding whether and where such a trail may be built would be left to the Forest Service and its public processes for making such determinations.

Like South Beaver Creek, the Old Spanish Trail could establish an on-the-ground route through this area if it was determined as part of the historic route, but it would be required to be non-motorized and non-mechanized.

LAKE GULCH AND CEBOLLA CREEK WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AREA

An SMA with the following stipulations:

- No new mechanized vehicle uses, beyond those existing at the time of enactment
- Continued allowance of restoration efforts such as the Wet Meadows Resiliency Project
- Emphasis on wildlife conservation as primary purpose
- See common elements on page 44

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Tier-1 Sage Grouse habitat and known leks
- Areas of Outstanding (B1) and High (B3) Biodiversity Significance
- Underrepresented ecosystem type (sagebrush) in the nation's protected areas
- Winter Range for mule deer, bighorn sheep, and elk. Mule deer and elk migration routes.
- Possible threat from mining in the area.
- Motorized use on existing roads

Rationale for Recommendation

This area is exceptional habitat for big game and sagebrush species, including the Sage-grouse. Given that sagebrush ecosystems are often underrepresented in the national protected area system, this area would be a significant conservation gain.

The GPLI feels that this area should be managed for wildlife and compatible with other uses, with extraction and motorized and mechanized recreation restricted. The SMA designation boundaries will allow existing roads (according to the 2013 Gunnison Travel Management Plan) including County Road 26, County Road 64, and several existing, system 4WD roads to remain open.

Senator Bennet's office has shared the recommendation with the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, one of the surrounding land owners, for their feedback on this and other proposed designations.

Areas in Discussion

Eastern Gunnison

EAST GUNNISON DIVIDE

Recommendation in Discussion – wilderness and SMA:

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- High Biodiversity Significance (B3), including potential habitat for boreal toad, and linkage area for lynx
- Elk and mountain goat migration and summer concentration area
- Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and Colorado Trail
- Heavy and highly valued winter motorized recreation, including hybrid use for backcountry skiing
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Existing summer motorized and mechanized use
- Wilderness character and exceptional views
- Potential for cross-county – Gunnison and Chaffee – and cross forest – Gunnison and San Isabel – proposal collaboration.

Rationale for Recommendation

This is area is home to some of the iconic peaks along the Continental Divide and additional protections would safeguard the scenery, recreation, watershed, and wildlife values.

Due to its proximity to the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness and high-quality habitat the GPLI began considering the area in Gunnison County for wilderness and/or an SMA designation. The GPLI is aware of the highly-valued mechanized and motorized use in the area and an SMA, combined with wilderness in appropriate areas, could strike a balance between habitat protection, recreational use, and the desire to protect the area's wild character.

Since the launch of the initial proposal, the GPLI has been in conversation with the Pike-San Isabel National Forest, Chaffee County, Colorado Off Road Enterprise, BV Sno Drifters, BV Trails, Colorado Mountain Club, and Quiet Use Coalition among others. There is interest in moving forward.

Continue to:

Engage public participation and appropriate analyses for final recommendations. The area may or may not be included in the GPLI's final proposal.

TREASURE MOUNTAIN

Recommendation in Discussion – wilderness addition and SMA:

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Very High Biodiversity Significance (B2)
- Elk Summer Range
- Ptarmigan habitat
- Rare plant communities
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Rocky Mountain Biological Lab (RMBL) has research sites near North Pole Basin and the Mexican Cut
- Winter motorized recreation corridor, connecting Schofield Pass to the Town of Marble.

Rationale for Recommendation

Due to its rugged wild character, the GPLI continues to consider this area for wilderness designation. The area adjacent to Mexican Cut and North Pole Basin are currently used for scientific research with the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory (RMBL) and are proposed for SMA designation.

Conversations are also on going with Crested Butte Mountain Guides, the Crested Butte Avalanche Center, Crested Butte Land Trust, Colorado Outward Bound, Wilderness Workshop, Gunnison Valley Climbers, private landowners in the area, and the community of Marble among others.

Continue to:

Engage public participation and appropriate analyses for final recommendations. The area may or may not be included in the GPLI's final proposal.

North Fork River Valley

CLEAR FORK

Recommendation in Discussion - An SMA:

- Summer motorized recreation allowed
- Summer mechanized allowed
- Winter motorized allowed
- No new roads
- No new motorized or mechanized trails, beyond those existing at the time of enactment

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Very High Biodiversity Significance (B2)
- Water supply for the Town of Paonia and headwaters of the East Fork of the Muddy Creek and Clear Fork Creek
- Calving and summer range for elk
- Populations of Colorado River cutthroat trout, including conservation populations in Clear Fork Muddy Creek, Second Creek, North Twin Creek, and South Twin Creek
- Overlaps Colorado Roadless Area
- Mapped lynx and moose habitat
- High potential for oil and gas development
- Overlap with the Thompson Divide Withdrawal and Protection Act of 2017
- Potential for the Crested Butte to Carbondale Trail
- Adjacent to the Ragged Mountain residential area

Rationale for Recommendation

To protect wildlife habitat and cold water fisheries from further habitat fragmentation. The GPLI is considering this area for SMA designation. The GPLI plans to continue collaboration with local community stakeholders to gauge the desire for additional protections for this area.

Continue to:

Engage public participation and appropriate analyses for final recommendations. The area may or may not be included in the GPLI's final proposal.

PILOT KNOB

Recommendations in Discussion - An SMA:

- No new roads
- No new trails, beyond those existing at time of enactment

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Water supply for the Town of Paonia Winter range for elk and bald eagles
- Summer range for mule deer, black bear, mountain lion and elk
- Mapped lynx and moose habitat
- High potential for oil and gas leasing
- Overlap with existing coal leases
- Extensive existing oil and gas leases
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Overlap with potential Spruce Beetle Epidemic Aspen Decline Management Response (SBEADMR) Forest Treatment
- Suitable habitat for sensitive bird species including the northern goshawk, purple martin, flammulated owl, and the American marten

Rationale for Recommendation

The GPLI is considering this area for an SMA designation to protect the area's wild character. Especially, the northern end of this proposal area provides opportunities for solitude and protection of wildlife habitat and valuable backcountry hunting experience.

The GPLI plans to continue collaboration with local community stakeholders to gauge desire for additional protections for this area.

Continue to:

Engage public participation and appropriate analyses for final recommendations. Where there is sufficient support, the area could be included in the GPLI's final proposal or not.

LAMBORN

Recommendation in Discussion – wilderness addition and SMA:

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Populations of Colorado River cutthroat trout, including conservation populations
- Water supply for the Town of Paonia
- Winter range for elk
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Migration corridors for mule deer
- Black bear concentration area
- Mapped lynx habitat

Rationale for Recommendation

Due to its remote location, high-quality habitat, and wilderness character, the GPLI has considered this area for wilderness designation and special management area.

Conversations have occurred with community members in Paonia, Hotchkiss, and Crawford that represent mountain biking, conservation, ranching, hunting and angling. Both through locally initiated discussions and outreach done by the GPLI, these conversations will continue.

Continue to:

Engage public participation and appropriate analyses for final recommendations. The area may or may not be included in the GPLI's final proposal.

BLACK MESA

Recommendation in Discussion - An SMA:

- Winter motorized use allowed
- Summer motorized allowed
- Summer mechanized allowed
- Winter motorized allowed
- No new roads
- No new motorized or mechanized trails, beyond those existing at the time of enactment
- Legislation should prescribe seasonal closures for motorized and mechanized use to protect critical wildlife habitat, subject to degree and timing determined by the managing agency

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Winter range and production areas for elk
- Migration corridors for mule deer
- Overlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Extensive winter motorized use on the Black Mesa
- Historical timber harvest

Rationale for Recommendation

This is a beautiful area with a high-level of naturalness. The area is also heavily used by ranchers, outfitters, and winter motorized users. The GPLI believes that the exceptional recreational, and to a lesser extent, wildlife characteristics of this area, make it deserving of protection.

Continue to:

Engage public participation and appropriate analyses for final recommendations. This area may or may not be included in the GPLI's final proposal.

POWDERHORN

Recommendation in Discussion – wilderness addition and SMA:

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Includes summer range for elk, mule deer, black bear
- Contain watersheds for Colorado River cutthroat trout
- BLM identified Lands with Wilderness Characteristics
- Overlap with Powderhorn Wilderness Study Area
- Potential lynx and sage grouse habitat has been identified
- Potential timber projects proposed by the BLM's Gunnison Field Office
- Potential winter motorized recreation use

Rationale for Recommendation

The GPLI is considering this area for Wilderness designation, but felt that the communities of Powderhorn and Lake City and other relevant stakeholders should be partners in any decisions that are made for this area.

The lack of trails and roads in this area provide a rugged backcountry experience. Parts of the proposed Powderhorn Wilderness Addition are BLM Wilderness Study Areas and are currently managed for wilderness qualities. This area sees little use besides backcountry hunting and angling. The Powderhorn Wilderness Addition contains the headwaters of Indian Creek. The addition also includes part of the West Fork of Powderhorn Creek.

The BLM has proposed timber and forest management projects in some of this area. The Working Group will need to coordinate with the BLM on any designation in this area.

Conversations are ongoing.

Continue to:

Engage public participation and appropriate analyses for final recommendations. This area may or may not be included in the GPLI's final proposal.

UNCOMPAHGRE

Recommendation in Discussion – wilderness additions:

Primary Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

- Unique geologic features including pinnacles and turrets
- This area contain summer habitat, winter concentration areas, and calving areas for elk
- Habitat for the American marten, American three-toed woodpecker, wolverine, northern goshawk, and boreal owl
- Bighorn Sheep range, as well as some areas of winter and summer rangeOverlaps designated Colorado Roadless Area
- Wilderness character
- Potential winter motorized recreation use

Rationale for Recommendation

This area includes the Little Cimarron, Failes Creek/Soldier Creek, and Turret Ridge Roadless Areas. All of these areas are upper-tier Roadless Areas.

The GPLI is considering this area for wilderness designation - as the 2007 Draft Forest Plan recommended these areas for wilderness. Conversations are ongoing.

Continue to:

Engage public participation and appropriate analyses for final recommendations. This area may or may not be included in the GPLI's final proposal.

Areas Considered and Not Included at this Time

There were several potential areas for designation identified in the initial report as "Considered for Special Management Area and/or Wilderness, to be vetted with regional communities". All of these areas are in and around the Gunnison Basin. Some of these areas remain in discussion but others have been determined to not be included in the GPLI proposal at this time. The GPLI is open to consideration of these proposals in the future if a well vetted and broadly supported recommendation is developed.

Cochetopa Hills, Quakey Mountain, & Tomichi Dome

Cochetopa Hills is south of Highway 50 and north of the Continental Divide, approximately 23 miles southeast of Gunnison and two miles south of the town of Sargents in Saguache County. In November 2017, a local rancher approached the GPLI to consider the Cochetopa Hills landscape for inclusion in the proposal.

Cochetopa Hills is an important regional wildlife corridor. It is a natural crossing point for many wildlife species in and out of the Gunnison Basin, and forms an important ecological link from the La Garitas to the southwest, Sangre de Cristos to the southeast, and onwards towards Quakey Mountain, Tomichi Dome, and Fossil Ridge to the north. This provides for excellent wildlife watching opportunities and hunting experiences.

Connecting the San Juan, Sangre de Cristo, and Sawatch ranges, the Cochetopa Hills encompasses one of Colorado's least-known segments of the Continental Divide along the southeastern rim of the Gunnison Basin. Cochetopa Hills is the second largest roadless area on the GMUG National Forests.

The area is adjacent to the Colorado Divide National Scenic Trail and the Colorado Trail. There is highly valued recreation on these trails, including motorized recreation in both the summer and the winter on some of them.

There are concerns about the potential for increased recreation to affect grazing opportunities, wildlife, and habitat. After several months of vetting this area with local stakeholders, there was not consensus amongst the GPLI regarding potential designations. Some members see the area to have high-quality wilderness characteristics, while others see the area management better suited as is.

The GPLI has decided not to include any areas in the Cochetopa Hills for inclusion in the GPLI proposal at this time.

Crystal River, Gallo Hill, and McClure Pass

The GPLI considered Crystal River, Gallo Hill and McClure Pass as potential conservations areas for their wildlife, water, and undeveloped recreation values. These areas are also critical to the viewshed of the Crystal River Valley.

With overlap of designated Colorado Roadless Areas these areas have high biodiversity significance, mapped lynx habitat, critical winter range, calving areas and summer range for elk. There is also severe winter range, winter concentration, and possibly lambing habitat for bighorn sheep on Gallo Hill. These areas could help to provide connectivity for wildlife between Huntsman's Ridge, the Raggeds and Maroon Bells Wilderness.

The GPLI started outreach with community stakeholders including several in person meetings with Wilderness Workshop, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and Roaring Fork Mountain Bike Association (RFMBA), and community members in Marble among others. Some of the concerns identified in this area include, potential overlap with proposed mountain biking trails - including the Crested Butte to Carbondale Trail and future trails desired by RFMBA - critical wildlife habitat for bighorn sheep, and potential habitat restoration plans by Colorado Park and Wildlife.

There has also been a long standing desire to use a stream - Rapid Creek - for small-scale private power generation adjacent to the McClure Pass proposal. Another consideration is avalanche mitigation efforts by Colorado Department of Transportation along McClure Pass.

After several months of discussion regarding these areas with local stakeholders, a number of important questions remain.

More time and effort would be required to develop a well-vetted and broadly supported proposal for these areas, and the GPLI has decided not to include Gallo Hill, Crystal River, and McClure Pass for inclusion in the GPLI proposal at this time.

Mendicant and Curecanti

The GPLI had recommended wilderness designation for the east side of Curecanti Creek. This area has outstanding ecological values and a high sense of remoteness and naturalness. The GPLI is unaware of any conflicting uses with wilderness for this area.

The west side of Curecanti Creek also has exceptional ecological and wilderness values. The western side of Curecanti sees limited winter-motorized and mechanized use, which would not be compatible with a wilderness designation. There are also several water structures in the area that might need additional considerations.

Both of these areas overlap with Colorado Roadless Areas and are remote with exceptional opportunities for solitude. There is overall bighorn sheep habitat, elk production and winter range, mule deer migration corridor and winter range, and Colorado River cutthroat trout in South Smith Fork Creek.

The GPLI has engaged in considerable outreach to Crawford, Paonia, Delta County, and the North Fork communities that represent mountain biking, conservation, ranching, hunting and angling. Some members see the area to have high-quality wilderness characteristics, while others see the area management better suited as is. As such the GPLI has decided not to include the west side of Curecanti and the Mendicant area for inclusion in the GPLI proposal at this time.

CHANGES INTEGRATED INTO THE INTIAL PROPOSAL

The GPLI made the following changes that significantly differ from the original proposals submitted and the GPLI Initial proposal launched June 2017. The coalition incorporated feedback from the community and all GPLI members for specific boundary revisions, changes in designation recommendations, and/or removing an area from consideration in this January 2019 revised proposal. The coalition sought to balance the needs of different interests when making these changes:

1. Poverty Gulch:
   - The extent of wilderness was reduced to allow for existing winter motorized use and boundaries were adjusted for the potential Lower Loop trail extension. An SMA was added to protect wildlife habitat.
   - The boundaries were adjusted to meet the needs of RMBL to access current and future research sites.
   - Language was added acknowledging the future potential for motorized grooming to provide a winter recreation amenity for non-motorized recreation along the Lower Loop and potential Lower Loop trail extensions.
2. Whetstone:
   - The entire area was proposed as an SMA, rather than a combination of SMA and wilderness, to allow for existing motorized and mechanized use.
   - Savings clauses for the future potential of proposed mechanized trails was added.
3. Existing West Elk Wilderness Boundary:
   - The existing boundary will be pulled back to allow for safe passage of winter motorized users through Ohio Pass.

4. Horse Ranch Park:
   - The area was changed to an SMA, rather than the originally proposed wilderness, to allow for existing winter motorized and summer mechanized use. The proposed designation area was expanded.
5. Beckwiths:
   - The original wilderness recommendation for Beckwiths was scaled back to just the steep flanks of the Beckwiths range in the initial proposal, minimizing conflicts with wilderness designation and winter-motorized use. Through public comment the whole area recommendation was change to SMA to further reduce conflict with winter-motorized use.
   - The SMA area on the west of Coal Creek was removed.
   - A savings clause allowing for the future potential of the mechanized Crested Butte to Paonia and Carbondale Trail was added.
6. Munsey/Creek and Erickson Springs
   - The GPLI reached consensus to include an addition to the current Raggeds Wilderness north of the Raggeds Trail and a SMA south of the trail to the private property below.
7. Flat Top
   - A savings clause for the future potential of the mechanized Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail was added.
8. Castle
   - The boundary between the wilderness addition to the current West Elk Wilderness and Castle SMA was adjusted to ensure accuracy with the mechanized Lowline Trail.
9. Matchless:
   - The area below the ridge between South Matchless and Rocky Point on the northwest were removed from all designations to allow for winter motorized use.
   - Desires for intensive restoration work for bighorn sheep and preservation of wilderness character were balanced by splitting the remaining area between wilderness and SMA designations.
   - Boundaries were adjusted to reflect Bureau of Reclamation's operational boundaries around Taylor Reservoir and Dam.
10. Union Park and American Flag Mountain:
    - The scope of the original Matchless-Spring Creek SMA in the Trout Unlimited Proposal was narrowed to two specific areas to accommodate additional uses on the landscape, especially recreational use.
11. Double Top:
    - Lands were removed from the proposed Recreation Management Area in two areas to allow for over snow vehicle use. One excluded area starting at Waterfall Creek, to the area below the ridge between Double Top and Crystal Peak. The second runs from the northern edge of the private property line in the Crested Butte South residential area, to the ridge between Double Top and Point Look Out, to Farris Creek.
    - In addition, the area north of trail 409 and south of Brush Creek road was removed to ensure Search and Rescue operation could set up a safety checkpoint with motorized support for the winter leg of the Grand Traverse ski race near Death Pass.
10. Star Peak:
    - The area to the northeast of the ridge between Star Peak and Crystal Peak was removed to allow for existing winter motorized use.
    - Friend's Hut was removed from the potential wilderness because it does not fit the wilderness definition of 'historical'.
    - The area between Trail #400 and the ridge to Star Peak was removed to allow for future trail realignment.
    - The boundary was pulled back from the east branch of Brush Creek and north to the vegetation line to accommodate the multiple routes of the Grand Traverse ski race course.

11. Rocky Mountain Biological Research Area
    - The lands north of Gothic adjacent to Schofield Park were added to the recommendation for protections to research and other compatible uses.
12. Deer Creek
    - The recommendation was changed to allow for over snow vehicle use as a more accurate reflection of current recreational use in the area.
13. Signal Peak:
    - A savings clause for the Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail and the Signal Peak trail system was added.
    - The designation area was paired with a new recommendation - Cabin Creek. This connected the landscape to the north and east for critical big game winter range habitat protections.
12. McIntosh Mountain:
    - Savings clauses for proposed trails were added.
    - Combined with the Palisade SMA for boundary manageability.
13. Stubb's Gulch:
    - Provision barring human entry was removed.
    - A savings clause allowing a connector trail between W Mountain and Bambi's was added.
14. South Beaver Creek:
    - Provision barring human entry was removed.
15. Sugar Creek:
    - Provision barring human entry was removed.
16. Cebolla Creek/Lake Gulch:
    - Provisions barring human entry were removed.
    - Proposal areas were combined.
    - Provisions added to allow existing use of motorized roads.
17. Steuben Creek:
    - Proposal area was expanded.
    - Black Gulch Trail was removed from the proposal area.
18. Gallo Hill
    - The proposal was determined to not be included at this time.
19. Crystal River
    - The proposal was determined to not be included at this time.
20. McClure Pass
    - The proposal was determined to not be included at this time.
21. Curecanti:
    - The west side of the proposed wilderness addition was determined to not be included in the GPLI proposal at this time.
19. Mendicant:
    - The proposal was determined to not be included at this time.
20. Black Mesa SMA:
    - SMA changed to allow for winter-motorized use, and was added to the 'Areas in Discussion'.

*Additional changes are expected for areas in the 'Areas in Discussion'. These include Black Mesa, Mt. Lamborn, Clear Fork, Pilot Knob, Treasure Mountain, East Gunnison Divide, Powderhorn, and Uncompahgre.

SUSTAINABLE TRAIL REROUTES

A component of the GPLI process was to identify trails that border or are near a wilderness boundary that need future trail maintenance. The goal was to evaluate the condition of those specific trails and topography to find an appropriate setback from the wilderness boundary to ensure the necessary space for trail sustainability reroute work. The GPLI sought to balance the need to preserve the integrity and size of wilderness areas, with the need to maintain sustainable trails into the future.

A subgroup of the GPLI, including Gunnison Trails, Crested Butte Mountain Bike Association, Gunnison O.H.V. Alliance of Trailriders, High Country Conservation Advocates, and The Wilderness Society, met, identified, and discussed trail buffers for eleven trails. This sub-group presented their suggestions to the entire GPLI and the GPLI agreed that the proposal and any future legislation stemming from this report should include the following trail buffer recommendations.

Trail	Trail Buffer	Exceptions and Notes
Rosebud	Wilderness should be placed 50 ft. from Rosebud Creek	East Cement Wilderness should stay southeast of Rosebud Creek and away from Rosebud trail with a buffer of 50 ft.

Cement Mountain	100 ft., with an additional buffer of 300 ft. from the saddle of Cement Creek to East Cement Mountain	The switchbacks on the climb up Cement Creek need rerouted for an improved recreational experience and to mitigate erosion concerns. The GOATs feel 300' would be enough to create a sustainable trail reroute.
Aberdeen	50 ft.	N/A
Trail #400	50 ft. with EXCEPTIONS	Exception: Beginning at the intersection with Hunter Hill Trail, the Star Peak Wilderness should be pulled back to the ridgeline between Star Peak and the Trail to give room for reroutes. This area will be added to the Double Top SMA. This change is shown on the proposal map.
Deer Creek	300 ft. with EXCEPTIONS	Exceptions: The Deer Creek Trail will have a 300ft buffer to the north, with the wilderness boundary out 500' for reroutes at the Black Hole, Dry Creek, and Perry Creek. There needs to be a 700ft buffer from W Brush Creek road on the south.
Lowline Trail	300 ft.	
West Brush Creek Road	TBD	The winter travel corridor needs to be GPS'd to define the Valley Floor in the winter. The Double Top SMA then will be drawn to this boundary.
Union Canyon Trail	100 ft.	
Cross Creek Trail	100 ft.	
Raggeds	TBD	This trail should be closely monitored. If the proposed alignment from Pitkin County Open Space for the Carbondale to Crested Butte Trail, to be released in 2018, is acceptable to North Fork and Gunnison Valley stakeholders, the wilderness boundary should snap to this alignment.
Doctor Park	100 ft.	

NEXT STEPS

This proposal represents the group's vision for public lands in Gunnison County. The proposal is meant to give the Gunnison County community a solid and carefully vetted outline of what public lands legislation could include in Gunnison County. However, the coalition recognizes that community involvement is essential.

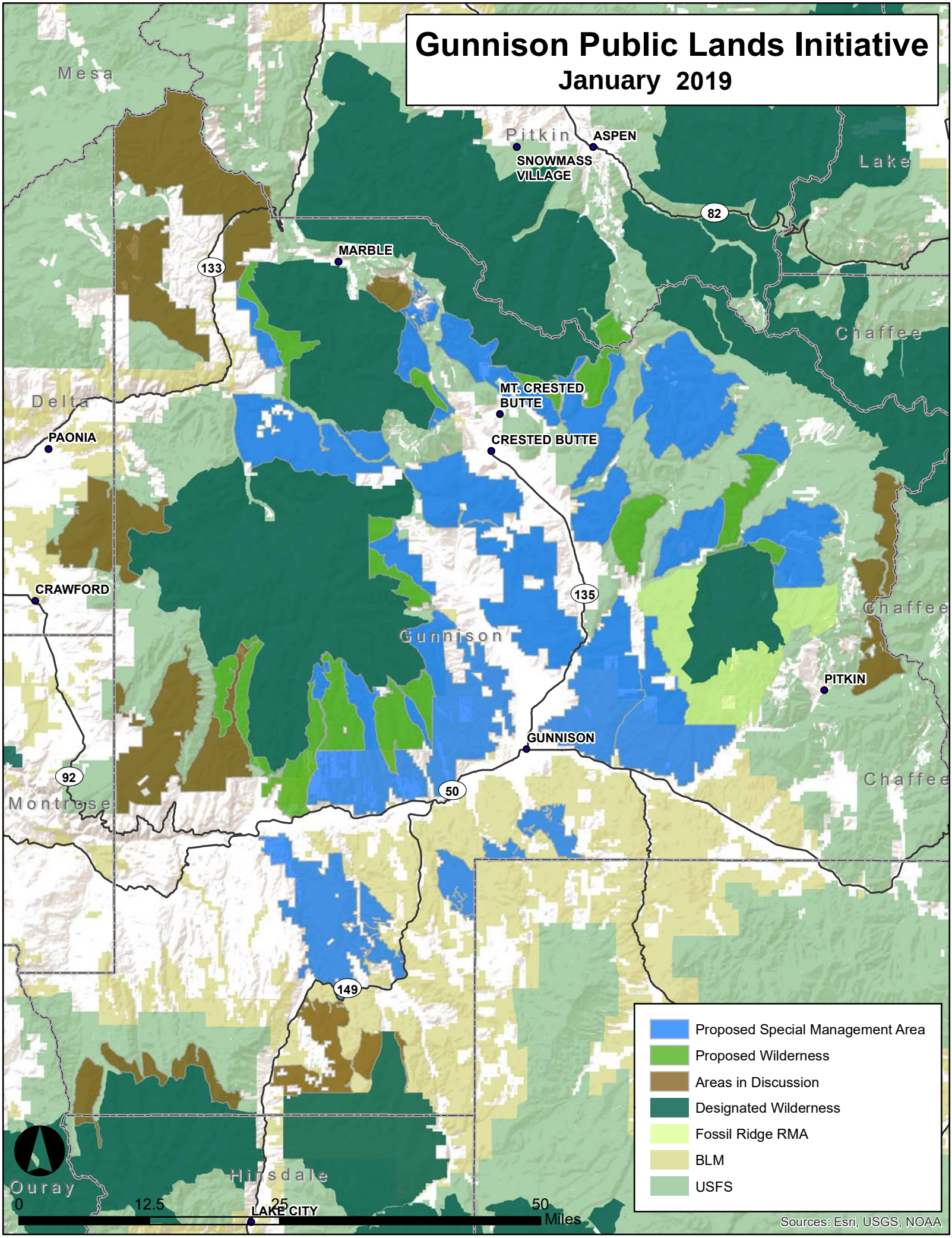
As such, the GPLI presented its initial recommendations to the community in June of 2017 and has since been engaged in a conversation about the proposal and what it would mean for the future of public lands. Through that outreach, the GPLI were able to meet with hundreds of people, local and regional government entities, and numerous community groups.

For the most part, key stakeholder groups and community members in and around the Gunnison Basin have voiced support for the GPLI's consensus proposal. At the same time, members of the community have had some specific concern with particular parts of the initial proposal. As a result of that feedback, the GPLI has worked to refine the initial recommendations including adjusting boundaries or in some circumstances changing a land designation recommendation.

With that input, the GPLI met in May and agreed to 452,221 acres of federal public lands to be recommended by consensus for protection as either SMA or wilderness. There are some remaining final refinements in these areas of consensus in process to ensure on the ground accuracy.

Simultaneously, the GPLI is still in continued outreach and consultation with regional communities on a number of areas previously noted in the initial report as 'Considered for SMA and/or Wilderness, To Be Vetted with Regional Communities' some of these are now noted as 'Areas in Discussion'. The GPLI identified these areas for potential protection as these lands are places where a trail system, watershed, river, stream, or geographic formation may cross-political lines. The GPLI has no intention of including any areas in its final proposal that are not based on appropriate analyses, public participation, and support. The GPLI will continue to have conversations regarding these areas and the community's ideas.

The GPLI plans to continue to engage the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, participate in the GMUG land management plan revision process, and begin the process of developing a legislative proposal that includes the 'Areas of Agreement'. As well as exploring community interest including protections from oil and gas development within the Ohio Creek Valley and in advancing potential opportunities to protect Gunnison sage-grouse habitat.


Gunnison Public Lands Initiative
January 2019
Mesa
Pitkin
ASPEN
SNOWMASS VILLAGE
Lake
82
MARBLE
133
Chaffee
Delta
MT. CRESTED BUTTE
PAONIA
CRESTED BUTTE
CRAWFORD
135
Chaffee
Gunnison
PITKIN
GUNNISON
92
50
Chaffee
Montrose
149
Hinsdale
Ouray
LAKE CITY
0
12.5
25
50
Miles
Proposed Special Management Area
Proposed Wilderness
Areas in Discussion
Designated Wilderness
Fossil Ridge RMA
BLM
USFS
Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA